THE ARMENIAN KINGDOM IN CILICIA DURING THE CRUSADES

The integration of Cilician Armenians with the Latins 1080–1393

Jacob G. Ghazarian

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ARMENIA

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In memoriam
Charles F. J. Dowsett
(1924-1998)
Calouste Gulbenkian Professor of Armenian Studies,
Pembroke College, Oxford University

To the memory of a teacher, linguist, poet and musician whose scholarship in the culture and language of the Armenian people was an expression of his lifelong contribution to Armenia's heritage

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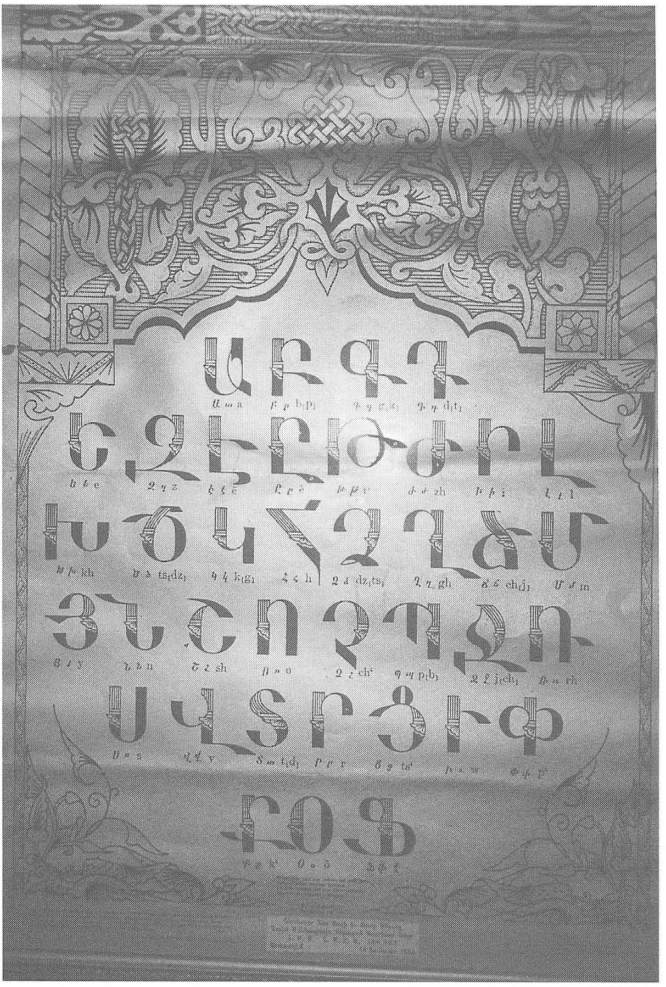
Abbreviations

Albert of Aix	*Liber Christinae Expenditiones*, RHC H Oc Paris, 1879.
d'Amadi	*Chronique d'Amadi*, ed. Rene de Mas Latrie, *Collection de Documents Inedit sur l'Histoire de France*, Premiere Serie, Paris, 1891.
Anony	*Annonymi Auctoris Chronicon ad Annum Christi 1234 Pertinens*, I. B. Chabot, ed., A. Abouna, trans., 2 vols., Louvain, 1952-74.
Ernoul	*La Chronique d'Ernoul*, L. Mas Latrie, ed., Société de l'Historie de France, Paris, 1871.
Fulcher	Fulcher of Chartres, *Historia Hierosolymitana (1095-1127)*, H. Hagenmayer, ed., Heidelberg, 1913.
Gesta Francorum	*Gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolimitanorum*, R. M. T. Hill, ed. & trans., Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1962.
Matthew of Edessa	*Chronicle*, *RHC D Arm.*
Monumenta Gregoriana	*Bibliotheca rerum Germanicarum*, P. Jaffe, ed., 2 vols., Berlin, 1865.
Michael the Syrian	*Chronique de Michel le Syrien, patriarche jacobite d'Antioche (1166-99)*, J. B. Chabot, ed. & trans., 4 vols., Paris, 1899-1924.
RCP	*Regestum Clementis Papae V*, Rome, 1886.
RHC	*Recueil des historiens des croisades*, Academie des Inscriptions et Belles-Letters, Paris, 1906.
D Arm	*Documents arméniens.*
H Oc	*Historiens occidentaux.*
H Or	*Historiens orientaux.*
Sempad	*Sempad the Constable*, *Chronique du royaume de la Petite Arménie*, RHC D Arm.
William of Tyre	*Chronicon*, R. B. C. Huygens, ed., *Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis*, 63/63A, 2 vols., Turnhout, 1986.

The Armenian kingdom in Cilicia during the Crusades

Regional map of the Near East



The Armenian Alphabet

Prologue

I would like to begin by drawing the attention of the reader to the words *'in Cilicia'* in the title of this work. Although the work traces an important aspect of the history of Armenians during the Middle Ages, the reader should nonetheless be cognizant of the centrality of the truth that the author merely recounts the transient history of a kingdom that took form in a land which was not the traditional homeland of the people whose history he tells. This opulent, characteristically medieval, history of Armenians is appropriately a history of a kingdom in exile. Persistent forces of circumstance had urged the distraught kings and nobles of the ancient land of Armenia to extract themselves from the crumbling remains of their native homeland and transplant their roots into a faraway land where they felt they might have a reasonable chance to start anew.

Yet their choice of the new land was hauntingly pre-ordained. Cilicia was not altogether an unfamiliar land. As part of the Eastern Roman Empire during the Middle Ages it had served as home to Armenians taken there by the forces of emperors, as it also had often been the choice of their mercenary compatriots in the employ of the imperial armies. The nuclear presence of Armenians in Cilicia was the seed, therefore, that took root out of necessity and grew into a kingdom in as much the same way a perilous symbiotic coexistence develops between two living organisms: when the demise of the host is inevitable, the end of the other is equally assured.

When I came to Oxford in the autumn of 1982 for my first sabbatical leave, I was fortunate to have had the opportunity to participate in a reading course in Armenian taught then by Professor Charles Dowsett at the Oriental Institute. From the very start it was a delight. Professor Dowsett's scholarship was at once infectious and charming. We, six in all, met regularly during the Michaelmas Term in his office on Pusey Lane just behind the world famous Ashmolean Museum. Though one may have an amusing mental image of what a professor's office might look like with stacks of books everywhere, and naturally not excluding the floor space, this one was indeed a sight to behold complete with the archetypal yellowing globe precariously perched on a pile of books defying all forces of gravity; surprisingly, it could still be spun along its tilted axis. Across the window from where I normally sat overlooking the

back of the museum, I could see many storage rooms which sheltered what appeared to be extraneous or yet uncatalogued life-size white marble statues of Roman gods, goddesses and emperors. So it was in this ambiance of lost ages that I often listened to Professor Dowsett elaborate on the common derivation of words that are used in so many modern languages. Words such as կին *kin/gin* for queen; բերեմ *berem/perem* to bear; դուռն *durən/turən* for door (German *tür*); անանիւն *ananiwn* anonymous; ութ *out'* for eight (German *acht*), etc, left us with an indelible sense of comprehension.

Though my introduction to Michael Chahin's marvellous book, *The Kingdom of Armenia*, came many years later in Milwaukee, I soon discovered that he, likewise, was a past student of Professor Dowsett and a classmate of mine during the 1982 reading course. To me this discovery was doubly rewarding because having read Michael's book, the idea of exploring the history of the Latin kings of Armenia took a more personal relevance and thus became a necessary pilgrimage. After Professor Dowsett's retirement in 1990, I had the great pleasure of studying *grabar*, the classical version of the Armenian language, under the tutelage of his successor Professor Robert W. Thomson of Harvard University.

Thus, given my undeniable good fortunes and the generous co-operation I have received from these two internationally renowned Armenologists, my one and singular remaining thought is that this book, a love's labour, would be worthy of the space it may occupy in the libraries of those who care to explore Armenian history during the Middle Ages. It is also imperative that I express my deep gratitude and sincere appreciation for the immeasurable hospitality and the heartwarming encouragements I received from His Eminence Archbishop Torkom Manoogian during my repeated visits to the Armenian Patriarchate in Jerusalem in 1997-99. The many hours of intense discussions we had on many aspects of Cilician Armenia gave me a new perspective and a renewed appreciation for Armenian history in Cilicia. I particularly thank the Archbishop for my privileged visits to sites which are often unknown or denied to many visitors of the Holy Land. His courage and generosity were certainly exemplary of his role as a spiritual leader, and for this I am grateful.

My special thanks go to the clerics of the Armenian Patriarchate in Jerusalem: Bishop Sevan Gharibian, Fathers Rasmig Boghossian, Vanik Mangassarian and Pakrad Bourjekian, and to the Librarian, Mrs Serarpie Kaladjian. I also thank Kevork Hintlian and Albert Aghazarian for their help. Their collective, congenial and selfless co-operation during my stays in Jerusalem made my work there, to say the least, a much cherished memory. I am also indebted to Professor Moshe Sharon of the Hebrew University, Mount Scopus, Jerusalem, whose kind help in my personal unrestricted use of the University's extensive library collection unequivocally assured me a level of success. Finally, the constant input and advice of Dr Vrej Nersessian, Scholar and Keeper of the Armenian and Hebraic manuscripts in the British

Library in London, whose vigilance and goodwill were the cornerstone of my perseverance, shall always remain close to my heart as testimony to his valued friendship.

A final word to the reader: the subject of this work is a history of Armenians in Cilicia. In the first instance, this implies out of necessity that Armenians must have a separate history commensurate with their heritage elsewhere from where their migration to Cilicia had begun at later times. Indeed, the history of that heritage is precisely the reason for the comprehensive general knowledge format we find prevailing in chapter one, but which, nonetheless, is also intended to set the stage for the story of the Armenian kingdom in Cilicia.

Therefore, it becomes instantly imperative that the impact of this kingdom upon the reader is made early so that the glory of its unique historical achievement, which survived for three centuries, becomes at once apparent. This impact is paramount because it is an essential and inseparable aspect of all Armenian history independently of any role that the founding heroes of the Cilician kingdom may have played in the successful execution of the Crusaders' objectives in the Levant during the Middle Ages. Hence, in the context of the latter, one can see that the present work also deals significantly with the subject of the Crusades. Indeed, a major motivational force behind writing this history in Cilicia is to underscore the fundamental involvement of the Armenians in Cilicia in the successes of the Crusades.

That involvement was without doubt a prerequisite for the establishment of the early crusader principalities in Asia Minor and Palestine. Cilicia's compelling geographic and strategic position necessitated its interlinking to the political decisions conceived in Europe during the last decade of the 11th century. As a historical phenomenon, a major portion of this interlinking occurred during the 12th century, nearly a century before the Armenian establishment in Cilicia reached its apogee as a kingdom. In the late 11th century the infant and fragile Armenian communities in Cilicia in the grips of the Byzantine Empire fought impossible odds against the might of the empire, and in doing so they saw their many alliances with the crusaders as their way out of the religio-political yoke of Byzantium; thus they inadvertently laid the foundations of their kingdom that was to come a century later. We must not therefore lose sight of their implicit purpose which was to manifest the glory of their heritage in their new kingdom as a unique Armenian experiment. It is for this reason that the contents of chapter two have been presented before those of chapters three and four.

The alternative approach of beginning the narrative text with the subject of the Crusades was ruled out early on. In that format my emphasis, at first glance, might have appeared to be just another treatment of the Crusades and the impact of this generally envisioned European event upon the peoples of Anatolia and Asia Minor. That, I felt, must be resolutely avoided. The

highlight of our purpose must remain focused on the history of the Armenian kingdom in Cilicia and on the essence of its collective political, material and military contributions to the Crusades.

Finally, it is to be noted that chapter seven sheds light on the political undercurrents that shaped the historical evolution of Cilician Armenia. The ecclesiastical tone of its purpose renders it unsuitable as the opening chapter of this book, which deals primarily with the socio-political history of the Armenian kingdom in Cilicia. However, the intended purpose and contents of this chapter are not divergent from our central theme. Malignant religious conflicts festered between East and West during the first millennium of Christianity. Yet, ironically, it is in the very nature of these conflicts that we find the answers to the fluctuating fortunes in the history of Cilician Armenia. But it is essential that we first be thoroughly familiar with that history however convoluted might seem the components of its *modus operandi*. And, there remains to be said only that though it is a monumental challenge to systematically separate the interlacing secular from the ecclesiastical aspect of the Armenian history in Cilicia, in doing so one may only succeed in dismantling the delicate fabric of the ethereal balance that existed between these two aspects of the history of the Armenian kingdom in Cilicia.

J. G. GHAZARIAN
Oxford
July 1999

The Armenian Kingdom in Cilicia during the Crusades

Introduction

Armenia: cradle of civilization. Where is this historic land? Who were the people that inhabited the Armenian terrain? Who were its rulers? How did they rule? Who were the major architects in the endless saga of Armenia's constantly shifting boundaries over the centuries? What part did Cilicia play in shaping the ecclesiastical history of the Armenian Church that continues to affect the diaspora to the present day? These are only select questions from a large list of enquiries that I should think would naturally spring into the minds of those who are familiar with the vast and complex history of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Caucasus. But above all, these deeply relevant questions and their unequivocal answers must be kept forever in focus by those all who claim a cultural kinship with Armenia and the Armenians.

Perhaps we can begin contemplating the answers to the above questions by carefully reflecting upon the inherent definitions in the following quotation which introduces the Armenians as:

> A race cradled in adversity, with the tenacity of hammered iron, nor has the hammering been slight. Of all the tribes and peoples and nations which embraced the Christian creed in the early centuries before power brought corruption, the Armenians are among the very few who have never apostatized from their faith.[1]

The apostles St Thaddeus and St Bartholomew preached the gospel in Armenia between the years 35-60 AD. Early in the fourth century (301 AD) St Grigor Lusavoritch (Gregory the Illuminator), the patron saint of all Armenians, founded the Armenian Church upon the conversion of the king of Armenia, Tirtad III (Tiridates) the Great, to the Christian faith. The king, in his capital city of Vagharshapat, declared his new faith to be also his nation's supreme religion. Thus, the king's declaration of Armenia's national faith had come more than a decade before Emperor Constantine the Great's Edict of Milan. This edict of March 313 AD had only liberalized Rome's position towards Christianity by allowing the new religion to coexist in Rome alongside mainstream paganism without its acceptance as Rome's undisputed state

religion. Christianity had to wait nearly seven more decades before it was legislated as the empire's state religion by the edict of Emperor Theodosius the Great in 381 AD.

In more recent history, the survival of the Armenians was no less a focus of national adversity. It was not so long ago that Adolf Hitler spoke the following words:

> I have given orders to my Death Units to exterminate without mercy or pity men, women and children belonging to the Polish-speaking race. It is only in this manner that we can acquire the vital territory which we need. After all, who remembers today the extermination of the Armenians?[2]

Such remarks demand our heightened awareness of the historical developments and the political scenarios which have shaped the evolution of Armenia and its people. I should like to make it clear that it is not my intent to delve in detail into the origins of the Armenians or into the history of their land known as Greater Armenia. Instead, this book intends to offer the reader a succinct account of the political intrigues that engulfed the rulers of the Armenians in Cilicia during the Crusades with the greater emphasis placed on the first three crusades.

The effort here will be to provide a progressive historical narrative that develops the integration of the Armenians of Cilicia with the crusaders of the 11th and 12th centuries, and to offer a potential 'eastern perspective' on the Crusades. Such a perspective must necessarily be bifocal focusing both on the pivotal role of the Armenian Church in the ultimate demise of the Armenian kingdom in Cilicia as well as on the political motives of the Armenian feudal classes of Cilicia which wove a closely knit fabric of interdependencies transcending all ethnic, political and religious boundaries across Byzantium, Cilicia, Cyprus and Jerusalem. With this in mind, I have not aimed at a single consistent system in the use of names but have often chosen the most familiar forms. Hence, Levon = Leon. Likewise, Hetum = Het'um = Hethum = Hayton; Toros = Thoros; Sempad = Sempat = Sembad; Stepan = Stephen; Zabel = Isabelle = Isabel; Sibyl = Sybille; Amaury = Aimery = Amerlic; Bohemund = Bohemond; Anazarbus = Anazarba; Vahka = Vahga; Hromkla = Hiromcla; Bagrat = Bagrad = Pagrad, etc. The reader should remain cognizant of the subtle differences in the spellings of these and other similarly specific names and accept them in the *esprit d'coeur.*

The notion that non-Armenian kings have reigned over Armenian kingdoms outside the confines of the ancient historical homeland may sound to the general reader, especially to the younger Armenian generation, a little unfamiliar and perhaps even akin to heresy if his or her concept of Armenian history revolved exclusively around the mythical, neo-Roman and the neo-Hellenic events which took place in the ancestral lands of Greater Armenia.

Such a reader's perception of the history of Armenians in Cilicia is more likely to be at best a vague, a less relevant appendage to the more familiar traditional history of the ancient homeland as documented by a number of such Armenian chroniclers as Movses Khorenatsi, Eghishe, Faustus Puzantsi, Eznik Koghpatsi and others. It is precisely for this likely lack of a personal familiarity with the Cilician history of Armenians that the writing of this book was conceived. More specifically, it is the singular purpose of this book to bring into focus the all-important medieval history of the Armenians in Cilicia, and to show how their successes and failures there came to shape the future of their race and the perpetuation to this day of their conviction in the legitimacy of the uniquely Armenian non-Chalcedonian Christianity.

Every Armenian child takes pride in the story of the Battle of Avarayr fought in 451 AD on a field in the vicinity of present-day Nakhichevan. The Armenians, under their commander Vartan Mamikonian, took a heroic position in defence of their Christian faith against the Persian Sassanian king, Yazdagird II, who had insisted on absorbing the Armenians into his state religion, Mazdaism. Though defeated in battle, the Armenians eventually secured the freedom of their religious worship and thus saved Armenian Christendom from extinction. This and other legendary tales of Armenian kings and heroes whose origins date from medieval times are the staple of Armenian historical texts which are told and retold with great ceremonial reverence. It is indeed a history which has been inspired and propelled by the strength of its own opulent spirit and by the richness of its heritage. Its traditions are fashioned in the ethereal spirit of the Christian faith, unbending, determined and always hopeful. This is best exemplified in the soliloquies of the tenth century Armenian mystic Grigor Narekatsi, who wrote:

> Let me not conceive and not give birth;
> Lament and not weep;
> Meditate and not sigh;
> Grow cloudy and not rain;
> Run and not reach;
> Sacrifice and not emit smoke;
> Let me not see thee and emerge vacant.[3]

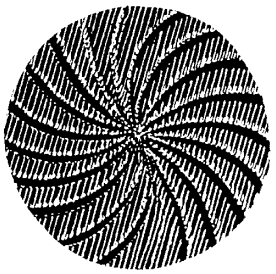
In contrast to the ancient traditional history, a coherent narrative history of the Armenians between the 11th and 15th centuries is generally sparse, fragmentary and much of its details are unfortunately neglected or skimmed over. The impact of this deficiency has already been alluded above. But I must emphasize that this period of Armenian history, and in particular that of Cilician Armenia, is no less important. On the contrary, the impact of the Armenians in Cilicia on the establishment of the Latin principalities in the Levant is immense and its significance goes far beyond the boundaries of the inspired holy mission that

motivated the West to seek Jerusalem. It is a history rife with ecclesiastical struggles for dominance when the Roman popes and emperors freely dispensed titles and crowns in the name of Christ's Church to achieve their own self-serving materialistic endeavours, much of it devoid of pious, or even credible, spiritualism. It represented a period of evolution for the Western feudal social order, a time for clash of civilizations, for the emergence of the East, and for the growth of Islamic consolidation and unity of its purpose in the Middle East. It behoves us, therefore, to remain cognizant of, and grateful to, the great efforts put forth by many of our contemporary authors who have given us their version of this history, however brief or biased.

We owe them our gratitude and admiration for their perseverance and diligence in a most difficult task. In this context, therefore, I wish to acknowledge among the many, particularly the works of Nina Garsoïan, Sirarpie der Nersessian, Jacques de Morgan, T. S. R. Boase, Rene Grousset, Vahan M. Kurkjian, David Marshall Lang, Christopher J. Walker, Richard G. Hovannisian, Claude Mutafian and Michael Chahin. Finally, how appropriate it is to end this introduction by expressing my profuse delight in Philip Marsden's most inspiring book *The Crossing Place*, which in a fashion speaks of the spirit of my written words. Philip's profound ability in the use of words has gelled for us precisely the essence of the 'Armenian Spirit' yet with such delicate reverence to the roots of this ancient culture that in my opinion must leave the reader in a state of utter introspection and awe. He writes:

> No other people has been quite so haunted by the demons of disorder as the Armenians, with their centuries of invasions, exiles, massacres, earthquakes. They have tried constantly to tie down their ever-shifting world with numbers, to palliate themselves with pattern. All their endeavours — art, science, even commerce — have been attempts to tame these demons. Their response to the chaos around them has been to dig, dig deeper, deeper into business, deeper into the mysteries, deeper into knowledge, in the hope that somewhere there is solid rock. So all the ruined churches of Anatolia, these *gumbats* at Konya, all Armenian architecture with its geometric temples, are not what they first appear. They are not so much a reflection of order as a defiance of chaos; not so much assured as hopeful; not so much a statement, as a prayer.[4]

Chapter 1



Medieval Armenian symbol of eternity

Ancient & medieval roots

And the ark rested in the seventh month,
on the seventeenth day of the month, upon
the mountains of Ararat.
(Gen 8:4)

Early Mesopotamia

Many of the most important sociological and agricultural achievements of early civilizations took form in the great fertile basin of the rivers Tigris and Euphrates.[1] Much of this progress occurred during the late fourth to mid second millennium BC as a result of the rapid commercial expansionism that spread principally between the Sumerian, Semite (Akkadian and Amorite), Hittite and the Hurrian inhabitants of this basin. In southern Mesopotamia it was the Sumerians who in the late fourth millennium BC introduced writing and founded the beginnings of the practice of city dwelling. The cuneiform script that can be read as Sumerian developed from the first records in the form known as pictograms, which usually contained descriptions of business transaction accounts.[2] By 2500 BC it appears that the majority of the Near Eastern populations resided in substantial cities of more than 100 acres in surface area enclosed by a city wall with estimated populations of 15,000 to 30,000.

Though the Sumerians are considered indigenous to southern Mesopotamia, recent studies have suggested that they may have migrated from the Indus valley of central Asia as early as the mid fifth millennium BC.[3] Akkadian migrations into Mesopotamia from the Syrian desert seem to have taken place in early third millennium BC. Under Hammurabi 'The Lawgiver', sometime around 2100 BC the realms of Sumer and Akkad were united into a single state known as Babylonia with its centre in Babylon. After a succession of kings who followed Hammurabi, the Kassite dynasty reigned in Babylon until the end of its rule in 1169 BC. In turn, it was replaced by a dynasty from Isin whose first king was Marduk, and a later one was King Nebuchadnezzar II (604-562 BC), who in 587 BC defeated the Judean forces at Jerusalem, destroyed the first Jerusalem Temple and took the king of

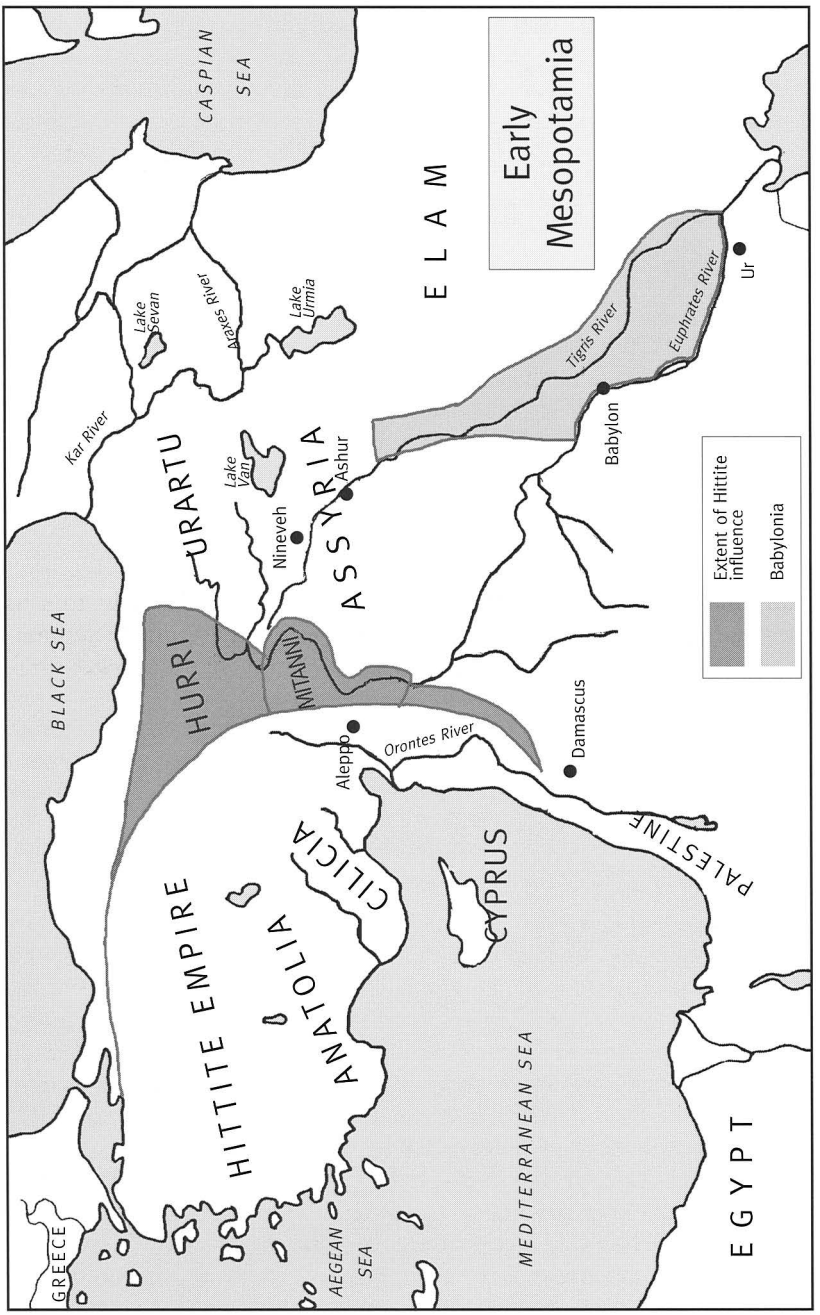
Judah and his entourage along with thousands of Jews as captives to Babylon.

The Amorite migrations into Mesopotamia also seem to have taken place from the Syrian desert around the late third millennium, but the direction from which the Hittites came to Mesopotamia is unknown although their appearance on the Anatolian plateau of Asia Minor took place before the second millennium BC. The Hurrians, on the other hand, began their southward movement from the Caucasus in the third millennium and were well established inhabitants of eastern Anatolia and northern Mesopotamia by 1800 BC. Areas in northwestern Iran, northern Iraq, far northern Syria and southeastern Turkey constituted the central regions of their settlements which developed into the Hurrian state of Mitanni. However, the dominant political pattern of the region by this time was that of a multitude of independent city-states forging alliances and competing with each other for power, and struggling for survival by establishing an overall political hegemony.

By the 17th century BC, the Hittites had begun to extend their influence from Asia Minor southeasterly and had come to control much of northern Syria and the lands west of the Euphrates. In the late 16th century BC the Hittites overran and took Babylon. But Babylon was eventually lost to the Hurrians and thus the Hittite taste for expansionism was brought to a halt. Soon thereafter, the Hurrians extended their power and eventually dominated Assyria. In the context of the biblical prophecy on the fall of Babylon we find a reference made to Ararat:

> Set ye up a standard in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations, prepare the nations against her, call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz.
>
> (Jer 51:27)

With the rise of the Hurrians, the foci of political and commercial powers in the Near East during the 15th century BC rested in northern Mesopotamia and Syria where Hittite and Hurrian cultures met face to face. But, as a consequence of the burgeoning regional competitions for power and the territorial losses suffered by the Hittites — predominantly in Anatolia, Cilicia and northern Syria — the Hittite Empire finally collapsed in the 12th centruy BC. It was about this time that Assyria was beginning to emerge as a major regional independent power in its own right, extending its authority along the Tigris River from its capital Nineveh in the north to Ashur in the south. Eventually the limits of the Assyrian Empire extended from the upper reaches of the Nile Delta in the west to the Persian frontiers and southern Caucasus in the east and north, respectively. Assyrian rule prevailed in Babylon in 747 BC and in 711 Sargon became its king. Sargon died in 705 BC and was succeeded by his son Sennacherib, who was murdered by two of his sons in 680 BC. We have a biblical account of this event in which the land of Armenia is specifically identified, hence dating the existence of this


Early Mesopotamia
CASPIAN SEA
BLACK SEA
ELAM
Lake Sevan
Araxes River
Lake Urmia
Kar River
URARTU
Lake Van
Nineveh
Ashur
ASSYRIA
Tigris River
Euphrates River
Ur
Babylon
HURRI
MITANNI
Aleppo
Orontes River
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ANATOLIA
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Extent of Hittite influence
Babylonia

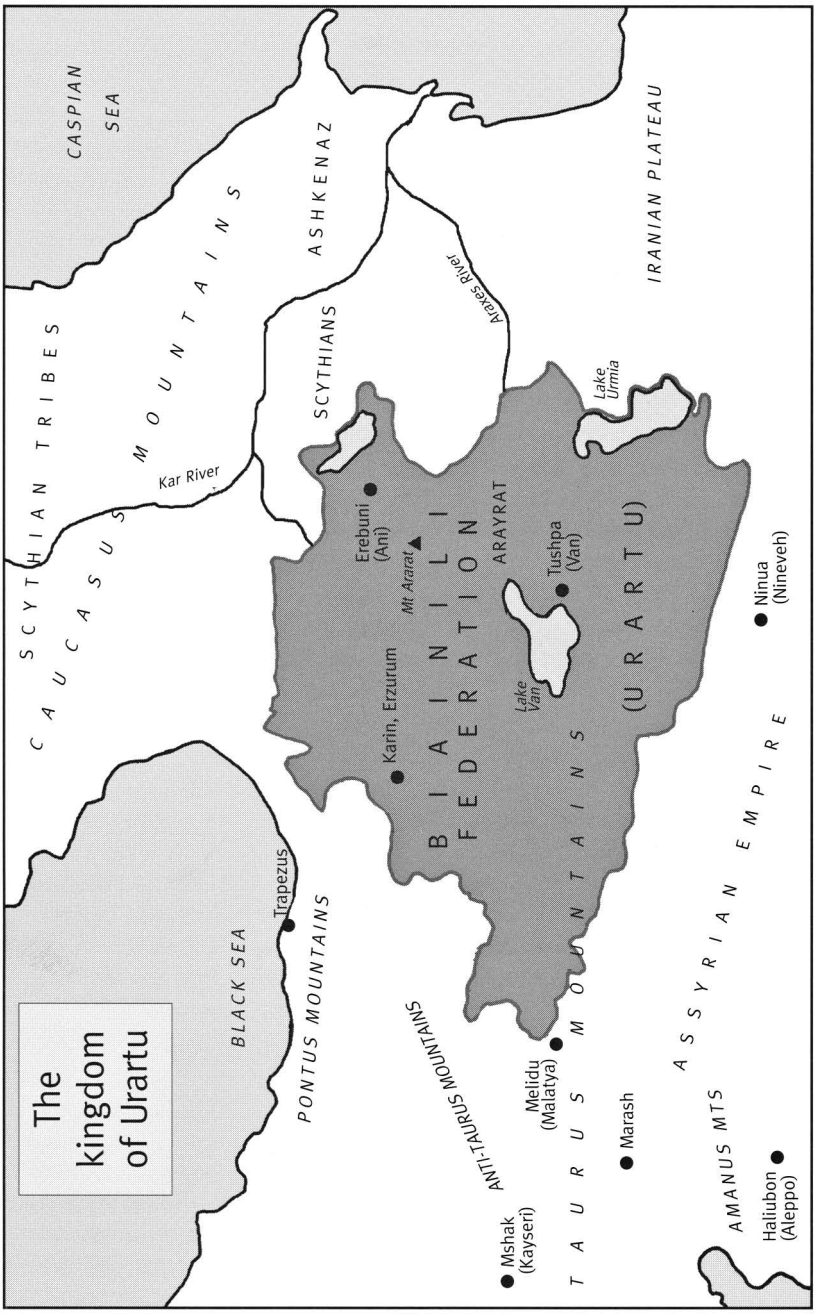
land, as Armenia, at least as far back as the eighth century BC:

> So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh. And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword: and they escaped into the land of Armenia. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.
>
> (II Kings 19:36-37) also (Isa 37:38)

The Kingdom of Urartu

During the early first millennium BC, in the northern reaches of Assyria around Lake Van, peoples predominantly Hurrian in origin were beginning to form a federation of states which soon developed extensively and came to be known as the Kingdom of Urartu. The area covered by the Urartian kingdom was centred in eastern Turkey with present-day Armenia in the north, parts of Azerbaijan in the east and a small strip of northeast Iraq in its southern reaches. It included the fertile Yerevan plain around Lake Sevan whose integration into the kingdom was marked by the construction of enormous fortresses for the control and administration of the region. One such fortress is known as Armavir Plur on the river Araxes, and another as Erebuni on the edge of modern Yerevan. Though the Urartian kingdom did not pose a serious threat to the Assyrian Empire for the control of northern Syria, the eventual collapse of the empire in the late seventh century BC did not come at the hands of the ambitious kingdom, but at those of the Chaldeans who first seized Babylon in 625 and then followed their victory with the capture of the Assyrian capital Nineveh in 612 BC.

The kingdom of Urartu, soon after the collapse of Assyria, expanded its territorial holdings westward and southward from the immediate vicinity of Lake Van. The boundaries of the kingdom were soon defined by the uplands of upper Euphrates in the west and by the Caspian Sea in the east while the Caucasus Mountains and the Taurus Range formed its northern and southwestern boundaries, respectively. The areas contained within these boundaries constitute the landmass of ancient Armenia, referred to as 'Greater Armenia', as opposed to 'Cilician Armenia' in which significant Armenian feudal settlements were only begun to be established in the early 11th century AD. The land of Greater Armenia was known to the Persians as Armina, and in ancient times it was known to its Semitic neighbours (Assyrians, Babylonians and Hebrews) as Urashtu, derived from Urartian. It is important to note that there is no intention here to dwell further on the subject of the kingdom of Urartu as its details are far beyond the scope of the present work, and thus my treatment of it has been kept sufficiently comprehensive. However, for the reader who wishes to delve further and deeper into the origins and formation of the Armenian nation, I highly recommend the


The kingdom of Urartu
CASPIAN SEA
SCYTHIAN TRIBES
CAUCASUS MOUNTAINS
ASHKENAZ
SCYTHIANS
Araxes River
Kar River
IRANIAN PLATEAU
Lake Urmia
BLACK SEA
Trapezus
PONTUS MOUNTAINS
Erebuni (Ani)
Mt Ararat
BIAINILI FEDERATION
ARAYRAT
Karin, Erzurum
Lake Van
Tushpa (Van)
(URARTU)
ANTI-TAURUS MOUNTAINS
Mshak (Kayseri)
Melidu (Malatya)
TAURUS MOUNTAINS
Marash
ASSYRIAN EMPIRE
Ninua (Nineveh)
AMANUS MTS
Haliubon (Aleppo)

excellent brief review published recently by James Russell.[4] In this review, a systematic and a balanced discussion is presented on the prehistory of Armenia and its language from a variety of perspectives, which make the reading pleasurable and highly informative. However, for a more thorough treatment of the subject of the Urartian kingdom and the development of its prehistoric civilization, I refer the reader to the most recent treatise on this subject authored by Amelie Kuhrt.[5]

Essentially all of the Armenian folklore and heroic mythology which most Armenians identify with find their origins, and understandably so, in the ancient land of Greater Armenia, the land of its native historian Movses Khorenatsi and where the Bible tells us Noah's Ark came to rest on Mount Ararat (Genesis 8:4). Armenian epics are not unlike those of the heroic Greek mythologies or of the folklore of the British Isles in the tales of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. Epics are the embodiments of national aspirations, ideals and dreams which impart meaning and identity to the cultures they represent. Most of the Armenian epic tales have sprung from the national will to persevere in the midst of physical and political subjugation and from the Armenian desire to find a safe spiritual haven from their repeated religious and social persecutions. Hence, the Armenian epics for the most part are necessarily tales of heroic revolts attempting to free a nation from the yoke of foreign oppressive domination. To illustrate this, one need not go beyond the epic story of David Sasuntsi (David of Sasoun) which tells the story of a rebellion of heroic proportions that occurred during the Arab domination of Armenia from the mid seventh to the late ninth century AD. Other, much earlier, epic tales of mythical proportions also exist:

> The Artsruni dynasty of Vaspurakan, whose descent is traced in legend to two brothers who fled from Assyria, may derive its name from Urartean *artsibini* (eagle). The eagle, *artsiv* in Armenian, was the totemic animal of the Artsrunis. In a legend, the progenitor of the Artsrunis is said to have been abandoned as a child but rescued by an eagle, which nurtured the infant in its eyrie.[6]

Armenian tradition calls the Milky Way the 'Trail of the Straw-Thief' from the story of the Armenian god Vahakn (Hercules) who on a cold night once stole kindling for his people from the heavenly woodshed of the mighty Bel (derived from the Assyrian word *baal* for a god).[7]

It is vital that we remain cognizant of the complexity of Armenian history through the centuries and not be lulled into thinking that it is introversive and devoid of historical substance concerning places away from the limits of Armenia's borders. On the contrary, we often speak of a historic Armenia whose rulers and conquerors alike created opportunities for the Armenians to exploit and exercise their talents beyond the confines of their native land. These encompassed territories in Byzantium, Georgia, Albania, Iberia,

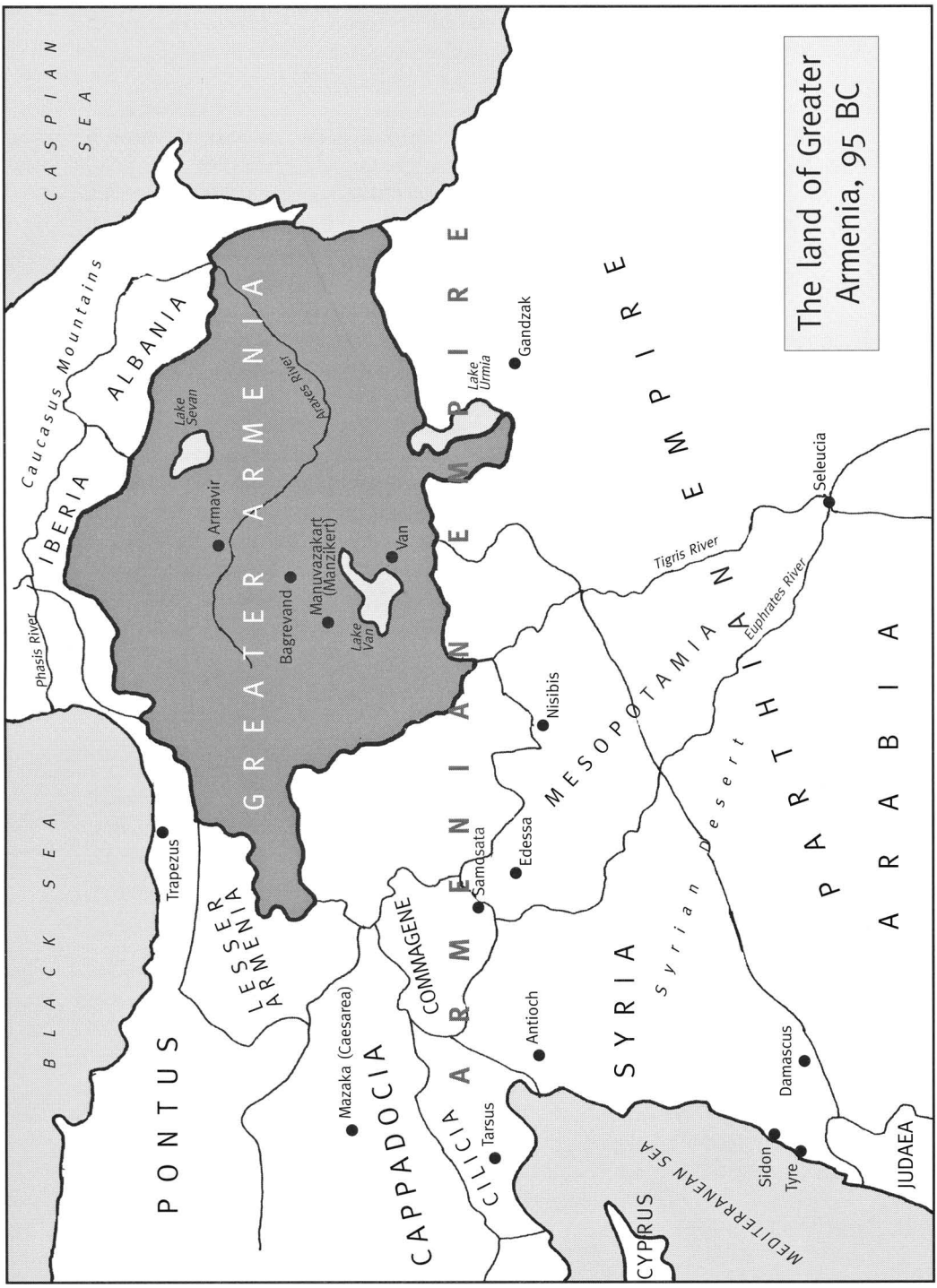
Cappadocia and in the vicinity of the Taurus Mountains in Asia Minor. The latter, tucked in the southern and southeastern parts of present-day Turkey, is known as Cilicia.

Arab rule of Armenia

During the last decade of the fourth century, the territory of Armenia was divided between Rome and Persia with the larger portion falling under the suzerainty of the Persian Sassanids. This situation ultimately brought an end to the Arsacid dynasty in Armenia at the death of Arshak III (Arsaces) in 428. However, the shared balance of power between the two great empires gradually shifted in favour of Byzantium. By the last decade of the sixth century, a larger portion of the Armenian plateau was dominated by Byzantium but ruled by Armenian civil administrators, curopalates, appointed by the emperor. For four and a half centuries, beginning with the fall of the Arsacid dynasty, Armenian sovereignty was in a political wilderness. In its place, the hereditary *nakharars* (the great nobility) as Byzantine vassals, or the Armenian *marzpans* (governors) as Persian appointees, assumed a more dominant role in governing their respective territories, and quite successfully developed the Armenian feudal system to its fullest potential. One of the most distinguished families that administered Armenia during this period was the Bagratuni family (the House of Bagrat), which later was also to govern Armenia under Arab domination; and, in cahoots with them, they achieved their ambition for power over other Armenian princes. But before this, the relatively peaceful state of affairs brought about by the fragile truce between the Byzantines and the Persians was to be suddenly shattered by the explosive surge of Arab expansionism that began in the middle of the seventh century.[8] The Arabs, launching their offensive from the Mesopotamian border districts in the south and also through Azerbaijan, succeeded in vanquishing completely the Persian Sassanid power. They then swiftly conquered Artaz in Vaspurakan, where they decisively defeated the combined forces of Byzantium and their Armenian vassal, Prince Theodore Rashtuni, who had under his control the territories south of Lake Van.

The Arab occupation of Armenia in 661, though not complete, was considerable. The Umayyad caliph, Mu'awiya, installed Grigor Mamikonian as vassal of the caliphate under the authorized title of 'Prince of Armenia.' Grigor governed his charge successfully for more than 20 years until his death when he was succeeded by Prince Ashot Bagratuni. Relations between the Armenians and the caliphate were at first cordial and accommodating. However, the devastation of the land continued nonetheless throughout the seventh century either as a result of Byzantine attacks under Emperor Justinian II, who was determined to oust the Arabs from what he saw as a Byzantine possession, or as result of Khazar incursions who had begun attacking the caliphate through the Caucasian passes in the north. Ultimately,

The Armenian kingdom in Cilicia during the Crusades



the amicable relationship that existed between the caliphate and the Armenians came to a sudden halt in 693 when Muhammad ibn Marwan was appointed governor of Armenia.

The Armenian prince at this time was Sempat Bagratuni, who was compelled to recognize the authority of the new governor and to whom he had to commit his allegiance and loyalty. In the early eighth century, ibn Marwan initiated his plan to extend Arab possessions in Armenia. His garrisons soon began to appear as far north as Tbilisi and as far west as Melitene (Malatya). The brutality of ibn Marwan ran parallel to his military victories. He removed Sempat from authority, demanded strict observance and application of Islamic laws, and undertook the execution of the Armenian clergy and destruction of their monasteries and houses of Christian worship.

The majority of the Armenian nobles fell victim to ibn Marwan's massacres, but Sempat managed to flee and take refuge in Byzantine territories along the eastern shores of the Black Sea. The folly of this policy however became quickly evident to the caliphate when they began to realize the importance of Armenian collaboration in defending their realm against the violent Khazar invasions from the north. Thus, ibn Marwan was summarily replaced and a new policy of benevolent toleration was initiated. Ashot Bagratuni, the grandson of the earlier Ashot, later to be known as 'Ashot the Blind', was honoured in 732 with the office of *ishkhan* (prince) and given full authority to govern Armenia. This signaled the coming to power of the House of Bagrat (the Bagratids) and the rapid rise of their political prestige.

The Bagratids: last kings of the ancient land

The collapse of the Umayyad caliphate however in 750 brought their more oppressive successors, the Abbasids, to the forefront of Arab power in Armenia. And with this change came the all-too familiar persecutions and extortionist policies that drained the Armenians of their wealth and drove them from their lands. This situation forced the Armenians, mostly under the leadership of the Mamikonians, to mount an ill-conceived campaign against the Abbasids. In April 775 they were met by a large army of the caliphate which destroyed the rebellious Armenians on two fronts, one centred around Lake Van, and the other in the district of Bagrevand along the northwest shores of the Euphrates. One great loss the Armenians sustained at Bargrevand was the martyrdom of their commander-in-chief, Sempat, in the field of battle. This however was not enough to quell the Armenian rebellions which continued to take place for decades with consistent regularity despite the defeats they were destined to meet. But, by the beginning of the ninth century, we find the great houses of Armenia that once competed with each other for dominance showing renewed interest in conglomeration and joining of their forces to do battle against the common foe. Foremost in this context

were the houses of Bagrat and Arsruni of Vaspurakan whose champions in the persons of Bagrat and Ashot, respectively, took up the challenge and engaged the enemy in battle in 851. Yet again the Armenians failed; Ashot escaped but Bagrat was seized and deported to Samara. But the Armenians in the district of Khoyt and Sasoun held firmly and managed to inflict heavy losses on the Arabs. Despite this token victory, the yoke of the enemy was not lifted. There was always a new army to confront, a new commander to challenge.

Yet all was not the same. On the one hand, Byzantium under its Armenian emperor, Basil I 'the Macedonian,' rising to the throne in 867 was gradually beginning to swing the balance of power against the faltering Abbasids. On the other hand, the houses of Arsruni and Bagrat were executing guerrilla warfare more successfully and their tactics harassed the Arabs more effectively, especially under the leadership of Gurken Arsruni in Vaspurakan, and under Ashot Bagratuni in Tayk, the latter leader being the son of Sempat 'the Confessor,' great-grandson of the martyred commander, Sempat. The reconstruction of the Bagratuni dominance had thus begun. Furthermore, fearing Basil's rising power and the imminent move eastward in his determination to recover the old Byzantine domain on the Armenian plateau, the Abbasid caliph, al-Mu'tamid, in 885, as a prudent political gesture on the part of the caliphate, consented to the crowning of Ashot Bagratuni as King Ashot I. Thus, the Armenian kingdom, dormant since the end of the Arsacid dynasty in 428, began its renewed independent sovereign existence with the House of Bagrat firmly at the helms. Under the guidance and leadership of the Bagratids for nearly two uninterrupted centuries, the kingdom thrived and prospered ending only once again by the treacherous intrusion of Byzantium in 1045.

After the death of the Bagratid king Gagik I, in 1017, the kingdom entered into a phase of rapid decline at the hands of the dead king's two sons, Hovhannes-Sempat and Ashot IV, and the Byzantine emperor Basil II (976-1025) wasted no time in his bid to regain the territories that had once represented part of Justinian I's acquisitions in Greater Armenia.

But the emperor did not live long enough to see the fulfilment of his objectives. However, a decade and a half later in 1040, following the deaths of the two Bagratid brothers, Emperor Michael IV (1034-41) boldly claimed the Bagratid kingdom, centred in its capital city of Ani, for himself and thus the annexation of Bagratid Armenia and her absorption into the Byzantine Empire was set earnestly in motion. The power vacuum created by the lack of a royal leadership resulted in a clash of interest between the regent Sarkis Hayk and an opposition party led by the powerful commander, Vahram Pahlavuni. The Pahlavuni party ultimately succeeded in bringing Gagik II, the son of Ashot IV, to the throne in Ani, now a vassal state of Byzantium. But only two years later in 1042, as we shall see later, the youthful new king was summoned to Constantinople and forced under duress to relinquish his royal rights to the kingdom of Ani in exchange for an alternate domain in Byzantine

Cappadocia. Finally, in 1045 the imperial Byzantine army formally accepted the full surrender of Ani from the patriarch Petros I Getadardz, who had been left in charge of Ani after the calculated removal of King Gagik II.[9]

Cilicia through the ages

In the year 27 BC, Rome had completed its conquest and annexation of Cilicia as part of the empire's extended provinces in the east. For the Romans this newly annexed province consisted of two districts based on the land's clear topographical divides. The first, Cilicia Pedias, is a well-watered fertile plain bounded by the Taurus and Anti-Taurus Mountains and the Mediterranean Sea, while the other, Cilicia Tracheia, is a rugged region of the southern Taurus range stretching west to Pamphylia. By 20 BC, the annexation of Cilicia had secured the interior of the Anatolian plateau which in turn had brought large tracts of land in Asia Minor as far as the eastern Cappadocian borders safely under direct Roman administration. This state of affairs lasted well into the middle of the first century AD. Upon Mark Antony's marriage to Cleopatra in the autumn of 37 AD, the province of Cilicia, with the exception of Seleucia, was given to the new bride so that she might have ample supply of timber from the Taurus Mountains for her shipbuilding needs. The Armenian provinces lying east of Cappadocia however were outside the Cilician frontiers and were partitioned between Rome and Persia in 387 AD but the native inhabitants remained rigidly resistant to assimilation into the Greco-Roman civilization despite the fact that they were eventually to play a crucial role in administering the Byzantine Empire.

Under Emperor Gaius Diocletian (245-313), Cilicia Tracheia became part of Isauria, and then at around 400 AD, Cilicia Pedias was divided into Cilicia I (metropolis Tarsos) and Cilicia II (metropolis Anazarbos). Their churches were placed under the patriarchate of Antioch. With the spread of Islam, however, the ambitious Arabs in the seventh century AD brought their military machine to Asia Minor and by the early eighth century they had occupied the entire province of Cilicia. It was restored to the Byzantine Empire by the Macedonian Nicephorus II Phocas in 965, however the province then did not have a unified administrative centre but was ruled through many separate regional fortresses.

Though it is clear that in the end the Arabs failed to gain a permanent foothold on the Anatolian plateau, their passive victories yielded an abundance of prisoners and much booty, which were carried away as the rewards of their successful campaigns. But a more significant and lasting effect of their campaigns was the great demographic imbalances created throughout Asia Minor. Not unlike the 20th century mass exoduses and dislocation of peoples due to political unrest and greed, the movements and transfer of large regional populations became understandably commonplace. Armenian inhabitants of Asia Minor fleeing the Arab persecutions resettled as

refugees further west in Anatolia and in the frontier towns of Byzantium. Armenian nobles and high-ranking officials sought the protection of Byzantium from the onslaught of the invading Arabs. With the rapidly burgeoning threat of Islam throughout Asia Minor, it was becoming increasingly apparent to Byzantium that the empire would soon require manpower to buttress its defensive flanks in Anatolia and, to achieve this, it resorted largely to a policy of mass transfer and relocation of native populations within the empire.

The emperor Justinian II (685-95) applied this policy on a large scale relying heavily on Cypriot, Slav, Syrian, and Armenian relocations into Anatolia and northern Balkans where Philippopolis (Filibe, or modern-day Plovdiv, Bulgaria) eventually became one of the most important Armenian centres. This practice of forced resettlements continued well into the ninth century AD even to the extent that new foreign settlements were established in the fringes of mainland Greece, as in the Peloponnese, sanctioned by the emperor Nicephorus I:

> He built *de novo* the town of Lacedaemon and settled in it a mixed population, namely Kafirs, Thrakesians, Armenians and others, gathered from different places and towns, and made it into a bishopric.[10]

However, a sizable portion of the settlers, particularly the Armenians, had come voluntarily. They were excellent soldiers and horsemen and, as the recruiting grounds for the army became more and more difficult for the empire, they were enthusiastically welcomed into the ranks of the imperial armies, a practice which continued an old tradition from Imperial Roman times. The Armenian voluntary immigrations into Byzantium had begun as early as the sixth century, and from the reign of Emperor Maurice onwards (582-602) they were solidly incorporated into the military fabric of the Byzantine army. For example, Nerses in the sixth century and Valentinos Arsakuni in the mid seventh held important military and court positions in Constantinople. In time, the Armenians became the imperial army's backbone and, not surprisingly, dominated the military establishment throughout the Middle Byzantine period. Unlike the Slavs, the Armenians by virtue of their long historical connections with the imperial armies rose to prominent positions in the hierarchy of Byzantine politics, even to the imperial throne. Great families, partly or largely of Armenian descent, came into power in Asia Minor in the ninth and tenth centuries and held a near monopoly of high military commands.[11]

The most prominent of these were the Phocas and the Ducas families. The emperor Michael I Rhangabe was deposed by his successor, Emperor Leo V (813-20), previously a soldier and by race an Armenian. The emperor Basil I (867-86) is presumed to have descended from the kingly house of the Arsacids (the Armenian branch of the royal house of Arshak of Parthia).[12] The

successor of Nicephorus II Phocas as emperor of Byzantium (963-69) was the Armenian John I Tzimiskes (969-76), a member of the Kourkous clan.[13] These two Macedonian emperors during their respective reigns aggressively crossed the Taurus Mountains into Syria, besieged and captured Antioch and Edessa, reduced Aleppo to vassalage, subjugated Damascus, invaded Mesopotamia and even threatened to take Baghdad. Their courage and valour had continued to underscore the great authority that the Byzantine Empire was to wield for yet another century.

An important aspect of the history of relocation of Armenian populations includes that of the Paulicians.[14] Regarding the possible origins of this religious sect, I refer the reader to an exhaustive treatise on this subject by V. Nersessian.[15] The Paulicians lived along the eastern border of the Byzantine Empire and were considered a potential threat to the military stability of the border areas. They were well organized militarily and, often fighting on the side of the caliphate, conducted successful insurgency campaigns in Byzantine territory. This led the emperor Constantine V in the eighth century to transport great numbers of Paulicians to Constantinople and to Thrace. He exploited the new settlers and utilized their military skills in implementing Byzantine iconoclasm, a religious movement in Byzantine history lasting from 725-842 when the veneration of icons was outlawed and all sacred images were ordered to be destroyed.[16] The policy of relocation of the Paulicians was renewed by Emperor John I Tzimiskes in the tenth century causing the city of Philippopolis to grow rapidly and become a major Paulician centre. Clearly, the immediate benefits of such policies were the quashing of the stubborn sectarian threats to Byzantine security and the potential usefulness of the new settlements as strong bulwarks against the frequent invasions by the northern Scythian barbarians. The Paulicians were also a substantial source of new recruits for the imperial army whose ranks began to swell rapidly with the influence and warlike energies of the resettled Paulicians.

A characteristic of the Later Roman Empire and the Middle Byzantine periods was the growth of private bands of armed guards of considerable number employed by noblemen for the protection of their territorial holdings. This practice became more and more common from the 11th century onwards and often those employed for their armed services included relatives and slaves of the noblemen- even members of a lesser nobility- all united in one self-serving purpose.[17]

The best example of this practice, as we shall see later, was the offer that came in 1094 AD from Toros of Edessa to Baldwin of Boulogne and his knights of the First Crusade for the retention of their services against Seljuk aggression. But, upon the insistence of the Armenian nobility in Edessa, Toros felt obliged to undertake the adoption of Baldwin as his own son and heir. Slightly earlier than the time of Toros, we know of the minor Cappadocian nobleman Eustathios Boilas who spoke of serving, for a period of fifteen years,

the Armenian Michael Apokapes, Duke of Edessa, from whom he received material benefits.[18] In his will of 1059 AD, Eustathios gives a detailed account of his large landholdings in the eastern Armeno-Georgian province of Tayk, which was annexed to the Byzantine Empire in 1000 AD by Emperor Basil II.[19]

By the mid tenth century AD, large numbers of Armenian settlements were well underway in Cilicia as well as in Cappadocia, Thrace and northern Syria. The earliest known Armenian settlers of Cilicia included Abul-Gharib Arsruni, the emperor's appointed governor of Tarsus; Oshin of Gandzak (of Lampron in Cilicia), from the House of Hetum; Commander Khachadur; Kogh Vasil and his son Degha Vasil of Goksun (Coxon); Philaretus of Kharput and Gabriel of Melitene.[20] However, the trickle of Armenian immigration into Cilicia from the sixth century onwards had burgeoned by the mid 11th century into a major socio-political movement[21] as the Byzantines earnestly repopulated their fortresses in the Tauruses with the migrating dispossessed Armenians.

As trusted vassals, the Armenians assumed important administrative roles in the province of Cilicia and quickly occupied leading positions in Byzantine commerce. Soon thereafter they consolidated their political domination of Cilicia and ultimately utilized their power to found the Roupenian dynasty there in 1080 AD.

The Seljuks had also played a significant role in the Armenian immigration into Cilicia. In 1077 AD, Malik Shah succeeded his father Sultan Alp Arslan who had ruled the Seljuk Empire since 1063 from its centre in Iran and had won a great victory in 1071 against the Byzantine army at Manzikert in Armenia just north of Lake Van. The new sultan, in the tradition of his courageous father, marched his armies west and in 1086 engaged the Byzantine frontier defensive settlements in northern Syria and eastern Anatolia. Without great difficulty he conquered much of this region where he installed new governors who levied repressive taxes on the sedentary Armenian inhabitants.

In response to this oppression, Parsegh I of Ani, the appointed assistant to the patriarch Grigor II Vkayaser (Gregory II, the traveller), journeyed to the royal palace in Damascus to register the discontent of the Armenians and to plea for the sultan's leniency on taxation. But he was met with little success. Although the patriarch's persistence eventually secured for the Armenians a temporary reprieve from the repressive taxes, the death of Malik Shah in 1092 brought swift reprisals from his powerful and greedy governors. Thus the sufferings endured by the Armenians at the hands of the Seljuks had become the impetus for many of the Armenians to seek refuges and sanctuaries in Byzantine Anatolia and Cilicia throughout the second half of the 11th century. Without further belabouring this point of history, it would suffice to refer the reader to the excellent reviews available on this subject,[22] which provide a more complete picture of the Armenian exiles in Byzantium.

Medieval Armenian rulers of Cilicia

Most of the immigrant Armenians, who had come voluntarily or who had been forcibly transplanted into Anatolia, were ultimately settled in an area that contained Cilicia in the west and stretched eastward to just beyond the eastern shores of northern Euphrates. West of the Cilician Gates they were dominated by the Hetumian House while east of the Gates the Roupenian House held the power. Further east towards the western and northern reaches of the Euphrates other Armenian lords precariously ruled their feudal estates under the watchful eye of the dominant Turks. The Hetumians, whose centre of authority rested within the realms associated with the fortresses of Lampron and Barberon, were mostly the descendants of Armenians who had long served the Byzantine Empire as loyal vassals, and who to a large extent had embraced the Greek Orthodox faith as Chalcedonian Armenians. As such, their political struggle against the more traditional Armenians of the Roupenian House became increasingly fierce and developed into a protracted rivalry . The Roupenians, on the other hand, from their strongholds in the Taurus Mountains pushed their interests southward and sought to control the lower plains and the Cilician trade ports on the Mediterranean Sea. This inevitably brought the two houses further into conflict and highlighted their ongoing struggle for political and economic dominance in Armenian Cilicia.

The consensus appears to be that the Roupenians were the descendants of the Bagratids who had ruled Greater Armenia from the ninth century until the fall of their capital city of Ani in 1045. During that period, the Bagratids ruled Greater Armenia in relative peace and prosperity until the Byzantines early in the 11th century marched their armies into this ancient land. Its reigning monarch, King Gagik II Bagratuni, was invited to Constantinople and upon arrival there he was taken captive and under duress was forced to abdicate his throne and relinquish all his rights in Armenia in exchange for lands in Cappadocia. Thus Ani was relinquished to Emperor Constantine IX Monomachus who, soon after his calculated conquest, began the resettlement of large numbers of Armenians in Byzantine Cilicia and, more predominantly, in the communities of Caesarea, Tarsus and Marash. King Gagik, being tricked into surrendering his throne, was bitterly hostile towards the Byzantium. Matthew of Edessa (Matteos Urfayetsi) writes of him: 'He did not cease to nourish in his heart a deep grievance for the loss of the throne of his fathers against this treacherous and perverse race of heretics.'

Gagik's son David was married to the daughter of the Armenian Abul-Gharib Arsruni, who had joined the Greek Orthodox Church and thus had become the emperor's appointed governor of Tarsus. Gagik seized every opportunity to take his revenge against the treacherous Greeks and often came into conflict with Abul-Gharib who, on one occasion, imprisoned Gagik's son David. But when Gagik came to Tarsus to negotiate his son's

release, he was seized by some Greeks — sons of a certain Mandale (or Pantaleon) — and brutally murdered in their castle of Cyzistra in 1079. This was a deed which was not to be easily forgotten and then only after it was avenged decades later by Baron Toros I.

The forced resettlements of the Armenians throughout the width and breath of Cilicia, and indeed even in parts of Byzantium proper, had given the exiles new political and commercial opportunities that normally would have been inaccessible to them from their homeland in Greater Armenia. New life and prosperity were injected into these outposts of the empire from which both ruler and ruled realized a measurable level of success. However, this shrewd and sound policy for the defence of the eastern frontiers of Byzantium against Seljuk threats was nonetheless a poorly executed short-sighted solution, and was implemented in haste with little forethought invested in the success of its long-term impact. The widespread execution of this resettlement had critically reduced the Armenian populations in the far reaching corners of the empire and thus had left regions such as Van and Ani with much diminished tactical significance. As the regional communities were sapped of their military resources, Byzantine garrisons in Ani, Van, Mush, Manzikert, Bitlis and several other outposts, grew weak in time and became mostly powerless in stemming the tide of the rising Seljuk danger. The Seljuks took the eastern parts of Transcaucasia and from 1048 to 1054 constantly harassed the eastern provinces of the Byzantine Empire and eventually overpowered the dwindling strength of the outposts in the provinces of Armenian . In 1054 Torghul Beg laid the district of Van in ruins while his brother Ibrahim, after ravaging the city of Vaspurakan, marched further inland and plundered Ardzen then set it aflame. A few years later Torghul invaded and took the city of Sivas, whose fate was as tragic as the other cities that had fallen victim to the Seljuk Turks. Byzantium's woes were compounded by the death of Constantine IX, and the ensuing struggle for power between Michael VI and his rival Isaac Comnenus left little room for the empire to give any serious consideration to the events that were unfolding in the east. Ultimately, the Seljuk capture of Ani came in June 1064 at the hands of Torghul's nephew Sultan Alp Arslan. Throughout the ensuing century, Ani passed from one conqueror to another until the city was totally obliterated by an earthquake in the year 1300.

The Roupenian dynasty

After the murder of King Gagik II Bagratuni in 1079, the surviving members of the Bagratid clan operating from their strongholds in the Cilician mountains began to act as autonomous regional princes (*ishkhans*) with little evidence of loyalty and respect to Byzantine authority. Their audacity and insolence received additional encouragement in 1071 when Sultan Alp Arslan put an end to Byzantine dominance in the east with his most convincing

victory at the fateful battle on the plains of Manzikert where Emperor Romanus IV Diogenes was taken captive.[23] Several sources give detailed accounts of the events that took place at the Battle of Manzikert. One such account is that of Matthew of Edessa:

> Soon the sultan, very well organized, advanced into battle against the Roman troops. At that point the emperor Diogenes went forth and reached a place of battle near Mantskert, called Toghotap. There he placed the Uz and Pecheneg mercenaries on his right and left flanks and the other troops on his van and rear. When the battle grew intense, the Uzes and Pechenegs went over to the side of the sultan. At that point all the Roman troops were defeated and turned in complete flight. Countless Roman troops were slaughtered and many captives were taken. The emperor Diogenes himself was taken prisoner and brought into the presence of the sultan in chains, together with countless and innumerable captives. After a short while the sultan made an alliance of peace and friendship with the Roman emperor.[24]

Baron Roupen I (1080-95)

After the humiliating defeat of Diogenes, an Armenian prince in Cilicia named Roupen, taking courage from the declining and much weakened Byzantine position in the east as a consequence of Manzikert, declared in 1080 the independence of Cilicia from the empire, thus formally founding the beginnings of Armenian rule in Cilicia under the Roupenians. Though surely this declaration planted the seeds of a kingdom that survived and prospered for several centuries, it by no means implied an immediate end to Armenian vassalage to Byzantium nor their freedom from the yoke of Byzantine sovereignty over Cilicia. Indeed, for a century and more yet to come, Byzantium maintained a tight vigil over most of the territories it could rightfully declare part of the empire and, as we shall see, was an influential and an important participant in the Crusades from the year 1095 until the demise of Constantinople in 1204.

The prominent lords of the Roupenian dynasty who ruled Cilician Armenia from AD 1080 to 1219 were Roupen I (1080-95), Constantine I (1095-99), Toros I (1099-1129), Levon I (1129-37), Toros II (1145-69) and Levon II (1199-1219), who was crowned King Levon I in 1199. It is arguable whether the precise ancestral origins of Roupen I may be ascertained with great certainty. Nevertheless, it is important to look upon this Roupen as a key personality in the convoluted history of Cilician Armenia. Despite the uncertainty in his ancestral roots, the pivotal role that he played in consolidating the national aspirations and longings of the dispossessed Armenians during the closing years of the 11th century cannot be ignored, and I feel he must be viewed with great sympathy. References to Roupen are

recorded by the Armenian chroniclers Kirakos Gandzaketsi [Ganjakeci] (of Gandzak), Matthew of Edessa and Sempat Sparapet (the constable, commander-in-chief).

There seems to be a general consensus by these historians in the implication that Roupen was a relative of the last Bagratid king, Gagik II, and that he had been a commander in the king's armies. Kirakos speaks of the Roupenians as the sons and descendants of Gagik Arsruni and says they enlarged their boundaries bravely, ruling over many districts and cities of Cilicia and Syria, including Sis, Seleucia (Silifke), Tarsus and Adana. A further reinforcement of Roupen's ancestral connection to the Bagratids comes from another Armenian chronicler, Vahram, a personal secretary to King Levon II (1270-89), who refers to Roupen as 'a famous chief of the blood royal, Rouben by name, baron of the fort Kosidar'.[25]

After the surrender of Ani to Constantine IX Monomachus in 1045, a number of King Gagik II's princes and loyal adherents, among them Roupen, faithfully followed the king's court into exile and resettled in the district of Caesarea in Cappadocia. However upon the murder of Gagik II by the sons of Mandale, Roupen gathered his family and fled to the Taurus Mountains and took refuge in the fortress of Kopitar (Kosidar) situated north of Sis. Relying mostly upon what was left of the loyal followers of King Gagik, Roupen developed enough strength to descend gradually towards the heartlands of the Cilician plain. There drawing upon his well tested military experience, he successfully harmonized and consolidated the Armenian national rejection of Byzantine domination. Thereupon he began leading bold and successful military campaigns against the Byzantines, and on one occasion he culminated his venture with the capture of the fortress of Pardzerpert (high or towering castle), which became a stronghold of the Roupenian dynasty.[26]

Although it may not be possible to definitively identify Roupen as the exclusive single-handed founding father of Roupenian rule in Cilicia, there is no reason why the contributions of other key personalities of the period cannot be taken into account. In fact it is more likely that the intertwining of circumstances created by individual players, either for personal gains or out of sheer family loyalties, are the relevant forces that collectively moulded the framework of the Roupenian dynasty in Cilicia. One such player appears to have been Basilius the Crafty (Kogh Vasil), as we shall encounter later. Another was Philaretus Brachaminus (P'ilardos Varažnuni [Varazhnuni]), an Armenian in the Byzantine imperial service. In the chaos following the defeat of Emperor Romanus Diogenes in 1071, the many independent chieftaincies that came into existence quickly sprang totally out of Byzantine central control. Philaretus, for one, appears to have exercised a great degree of autonomy and had well established himself in the western regions of the Euphrates with Marash as his centre.[27]

In Antioch, its Armenian ruler Vasak was assassinated by the Greeks in 1076 giving Philaretus the impetus to expand his holdings south towards

Antioch. Thus he attacked and defeated the Greeks of Antioch and annexed the area to his expanding realm. It seems that Philaretus was at the height of his power when King Gagik II was murdered in 1079, which had sparked Roupen and his son Constantine into their series of assaults at the remnants of Byzantine authority in Cilicia. It was reasonable to expect that Roupen and Philaretus would join forces against their common foe.

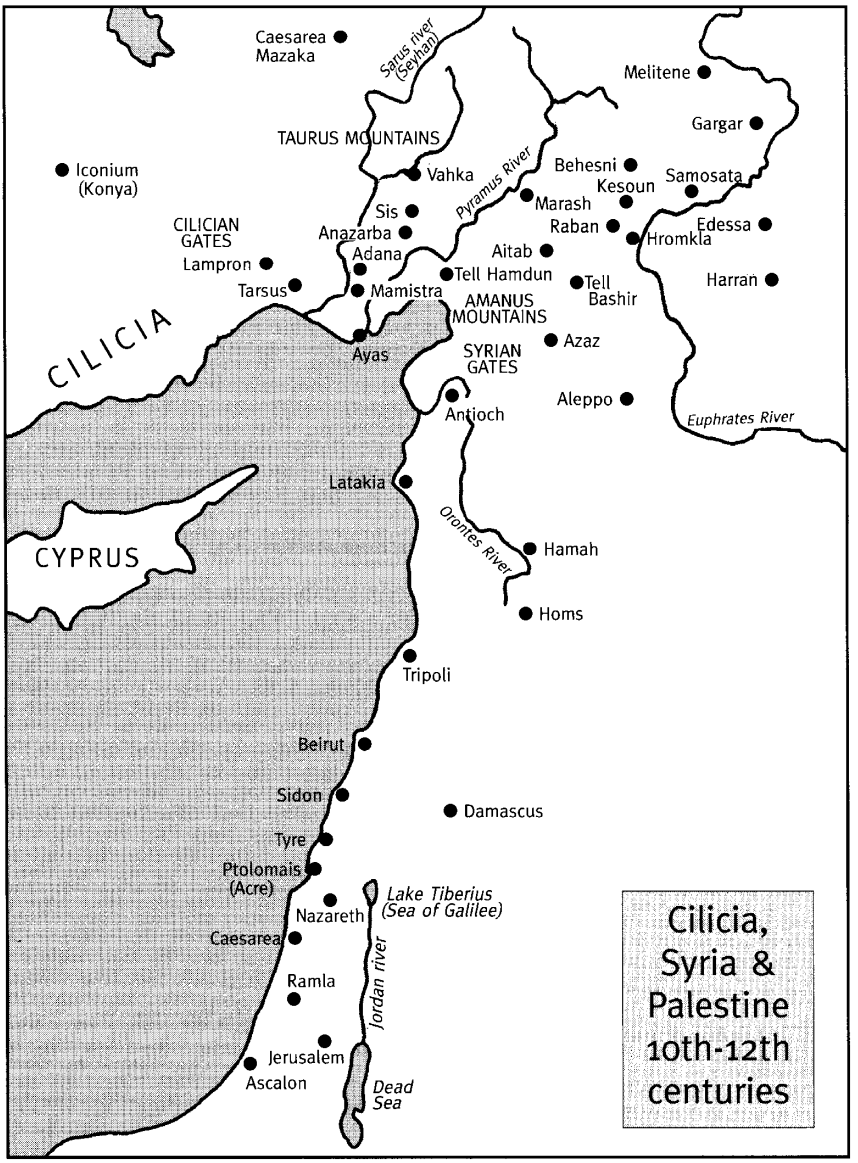
Thus jointly they expanded northward and eastward and by 1083 their territorial rule extended over Aplastan, Melitene, Gargar, Kesoun and Edessa. But by 1090, Roupen was growing old. His command seems to have then passed entirely to his son Constantine, who in the same year conquered the strategic Cilician castle of Vahka, an important geographic link connecting Sis to Cappadocia. Roupen died in 1095 at the age of 70.

Baron Constantine I (1095-99)

According to the chroniclers Matthew of Edessa and Sempat Sparapet, Constantine, son of Roupen, is also identified as being either a prince of King Gagik II, or some kind of a military commander in the monarch's clan in exile. The year of his birth has not been conclusively established, but he was probably born sometime between 1035 and 1040. It follows therefore that at the time of the sacking of Ani in 1045, Constantine could not have been older than ten years of age, much too young to be in the service of Gagik's army. However, the many years of continued loyalty and service to the king in exile demonstrated by his long and faithful supporters eventually provided the opportunity for the adult Constantine to enter into the service of the king in Cilicia. The chronicler Vahram describes Constantine as

> A valiant and a magnanimous prince. He fought many battles, and conquered many forts; he destroyed the armies of the Greeks and took many captives. The dominions of Constantine extended to the seas; he was highly honored by the Franks, and was their ally against the Turks; they raised his possessions to the dignity of a *comitatus*, and appointed him the *count* and *margrave*.

It is doubtful that Constantine's contemporary, the Byzantine emperor Alexius Comnenus, would have been greatly pleased with the appointment of this Armenian prince as margrave, i.e. chief of the cavalry, and a count at a time when Byzantium was extorting oaths of homage and fealty from the crusading Franks —'the customary oath of the Latins'— in connection with assurances that any conquered land in Anatolia or Syria would be returned to the Byzantine Empire. Constantine was viewed as a usurper of Byzantine authority in Cilicia and was certainly considered an ally of the first crusaders. The fact is that Constantine and the Armenians of Cilicia would have welcomed any powerful ally against their Greek foes so it was not surprising


Caesarea
Mazaka
Sarus river
(Seyhan)
Melitene
Gargar
TAURUS MOUNTAINS
Iconium
(Konya)
Vahka
Pyramus River
Behesni
Samosata
Kesoun
Marash
Sis
CILICIAN
GATES
Anazarba
Raban
Edessa
Hromkla
Adana
Aitab
Lampron
Tell Hamdun
Tell
Bashir
Harran
Tarsus
Mamistra
AMANUS
MOUNTAINS
CILICIA
Ayas
Azaz
SYRIAN
GATES
Aleppo
Antioch
Euphrates River
Latakia
Orontes River
CYPRUS
Hamah
Homs
Tripoli
Beirut
Sidon
Damascus
Tyre
Ptolomais
(Acre)
Lake Tiberius
(Sea of Galilee)
Nazareth
Caesarea
Jordan river
Ramla
Jerusalem
Ascalon
Dead
Sea
Cilicia,
Syria &
Palestine
10th-12th
centuries

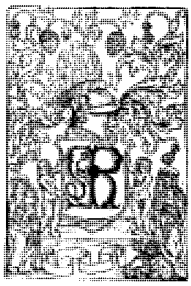
that they saw fit to provide ample provisions to the Latins, for example during the difficult period of the siege of Antioch in the winter of 1097. Kirakos, the chronicler writes:

> On this army laying siege to Antioch, their provisions were exhausted, and a famine broke out in their camp. Constantine the Armenian prince, on being informed of this, sent them an abundance of provisions, and the same was done by Oshin and Bazuney, two of his chiefs, some time afterwards. Basilius the Crafty and the monks of the convents in the Black Mountain also sent provisions to the Latin camp. On the taking of Antioch, the Latins to show their sense of the kindness they had experienced from Constantine, sent him valuable presents, created him a marquis, and conferred on him an order of knighthood.

Constantine seems to have died around 1100 and was survived by his two sons Toros and Levon. During his rule, he had controlled the greater part of the regions around the Taurus Mountains, and had invested much of his efforts in cultivating the lands and rebuilding the towns within his domain. Legend has it that near the time of his death:

> There occurred a sign from heaven, announcing the death of this extraordinary man; the meat brought to him on a silver plate started suddenly away, and fled to the corner of the house and hid itself among the poultry. Wise men looked on this as a sign that he the (king) would soon be gathered to his forefathers, and so it happened. He reposeth in Christ with his father Rouben and was buried in the church called Castalon.

Chapter 2



The colophon of Richard Pynson's translation of 'A Lytell Cronycle'

The heritage of the new kingdom

The kingdom & its kings (1199-1289)

The history of the Armenians in Cilicia is an example of a people who had the courage and the determination to forge ahead with the vision of an independent state encompassed in territories which were essentially removed from their native historical homeland far to the east in the Cacauses. In the previous chapter we followed how this vision came to materialize in the emergence of the Roupenian dynasty as the early dominant unifying force in Cilicia that carried forward the Armenian sense of independence after the fall of Ani in 1045. This period of Armenian history in Cilicia saw the development and the establishment of the New Kingdom under the Roupenian Baron Levon II whose shrewd but no less magnificent political manoeuvring with Catholic Rome achieved his crowning as Levon I, the first king of Cilician Armenia with Sis as its capital. This in essence was the greatest contribution made by the Roupenians whose legacy continuously influenced and shaped the history of the new nation until its demise. On the other hand, the political dominance of Cilician Armenia by the rivals of Roupenian rule, the Hetumian dynasty, which began after the death of Levon I in 1219 was no less fundamental to the survival of the new Armenian kingdom than that of its predecessors.

The dawn of Hetumian rule of Cilician Armenia begins essentially with King Hetum I. This was a period of progress rich with accomplishments in civil and ecclesiastical laws. It was a period that cemented the loose bonds between the kingdom of Armenia and the nobility of the West whose main aspiration had been the restoration of their lost wealth in Palestine. This was a vast history full of self-serving diplomacy with undefined frontiers, yet, a cursory review of the literature quickly reveals a clear absence of chronological narratives that follow the orderly transitions of power from one ruling dynasty to another. What follows in this chapter is my own selection of the historical events that progressively highlight the continuity of power that ruled and governed the land of Cilicia from the death of King Levon I to the end of King

Levon IV's reign in 1342. This is not to say that what I have chosen to present is complete, nor that it is selected with a biased approach in favour of the Armenians, but it is nonetheless an important narrative of the flow of history that shaped the fortunes of Cilician Armenia and ultimately its demise. If the reader disagrees with my emphasis, then my answer can only be that this emphasis is mine alone and fulfills that which I have perceived to be sadly unavailable to the general reader. Therefore, I have made every effort to remain faithful to the task of presenting a readable narrative that guides the reader from one aspect of Armenian history to the next with the hope that in the reader's mind a clear picture emerges of the prevailing political atmosphere of the times and places relevant to the history of Armenians in Cilicia.

After Levon's death in 1219, his grandnephew, Raymond-Roupen, having established himself in Tarsus, laid claim to the throne by virtue of lineage through his Roupenian mother Alice, the niece of the dead king. However, Levon's daughter Zabel (Isabel) emerged finally as the favourite of the ruling Armenian nobles and thus she was proclaimed queen by acclamation and placed under the regency of Adam of Baghras. Shortly thereafter, Baghras was assassinated and thus the regency passed to the only remaining influential Armenian house, that of the Hetumian family whose head was Baron Constantine of Lampron, the great-grandson of Hetum of Lampron. The Hetumians, who had been traditionally the pro-Byzantine faction of Cilician Armenia, were now in a unique political position not only to pursue their ambitions for the throne, but also to champion a move away from the Frankish influences that had begun to infiltrate Armenia through intermarriages with the Roupenians.

The Hetumians hoped to foster a new wave of Armenian nationalism. That this indeed was a realistic mission stemmed first from the unexpected death of Raymond-Roupen, who had been captured and imprisoned by Constantine for having falsely declared himself king of Armenia. The ambitious usurper had gathered an army and taken possession of Tarsus and was on his way to Sis when he was confronted by Constantine's forces and vanquished. This event left Zabel the sole and largely incontestable heir to her father's throne. Constantine, now a self-appointed regent of the realm, apparently set out to govern the land with a firm determination.

As the new regent, Constantine was generous with funds and resources for the building and restoration of churches and gave the clergy a degree of autonomy to oversee the spiritual growth of the people. The Armenian patriarch at the time was Hovhannes VII (John VII) who, having served once before (1202-3), had followed David III (1203-5). David had been elevated to the seat of the patriarchy by King Levon I whose dispute with John had led to the new appointment. However, after two years in service, David was replaced by John when the king's dispute with him was resolved.[1] Constantine was quick to realize that the politics of the time dictated differently from the Hetumians' aspirations and was soon convinced to seek an alliance with

Bohemond IV, a Norman of the House of Antioch, to fend off the Seljuks who were now becoming a threat along the western frontiers of the kingdom. This alliance was sealed through the marriage of Bohemond's son Philip to Queen Zabel. In the main, as logic would predict, Armenian sentiments did not lie with Philip. He was too 'Latin' for their taste and refused to abide by the precepts of the Armenian Church. So in late 1224, Philip was arrested and imprisoned in Sis for stealing the crown jewels of Armenia, which he had sent to Antioch. After several months in confinement in the fortress of Pardzerpert, Philip was killed by poisoning. His young widow Zabel, who on the death of Philip had decided to embrace a monastic life, took temporary residence in the city of Seleucia with her husband's relatives. But later she was forced into marriage with Constantine's son Hetum who was subsequently crowned King Hetum I in Tarsus in June of 1226. This apparent unification in marriage of the two principal dynastic forces of Cilicia ended a century of dynastic and territorial rivalry and brought the Hetumians to the forefront of political dominance in Cilician Armenia.

The Hetumian dynasty – Hetum I (1226-69)

Although the accession of Hetum I marks the beginning of Cilician Armenia's united dynastic kingdom, his reign began at a time when two great destructive militarist hordes were rampaging across much of Europe and Asia Minor, intent upon exacting great territorial gains. In 1225, Bohemond IV had appealed to Constantine for the release of his son Philip from imprisonment, but the ensuing negotiations failed to save the life of Zabel's consort. Bohemond, in anger, sought the alliance of Sultan Kaikobad of Iconium (Konya), who was assisted by Bohemond in ravaging northern Cilicia and extracting economic concessions. The Seljuks invaded Cilician Armenia again in 1233 and 1245, and were finally able to capture selected regions west of Silifke, along the southern coastal plains of the Taurus Mountains, which had been traditionally occupied by Armenians throughout much of the Roupenian dynasty. These were hardly happy times for Hetum. The coins that the beleaguered monarch struck bore on one side his image mounted on a horse holding the royal sceptre, but on the obverse, the name of the sultan was inscribed in Arabic script. This was also a time that heralded the rise of the Mongols from deep within the Asian interior. Their great khan, Jenghiz, and eventually his son and successor Ögödai Khan, succeeded with devastating speed and ferocity in laying waste much of northern China, northern Persia, Greater Armenia and southern Caucasus north of the anti-Taurus Mountains. From 1237-1241 the Mongols had managed to cut across much of Ukraine, Central Russia, Hungary and Poland then underlining these victories with the annihilation of the German armies at Liegnitz in Silesia (western Poland) in 1241.

These achievements were culminated in 1243 with Paychu Khan's decisive victory over the Seljuks of Iconium. But, surprisingly, much of Hetum's kingdom under his visionary rule remained intact and survived prosperously. We shall now explore a few of the major reasons for Hetum's success.

Hetum I appears to have been a wise monarch who was genuinely liked and respected both by his subjects and his peers. The chronicler Hayton (Hetum) of Korikos, Hetum's nephew through his brother Oshin, speaks with fondness of his uncle and shows great admiration for the king's wisdom and his strength of character. Likewise, the chronicler Kirakos of Gandzak (Ganjakeci) in his record — which initially chronicles the Armenian ecclesiastical history — also includes a description of events that took place during Hetum's reign. Kirakos describes Hetum's reception of Armenian dignitaries as follows:

> He received them all with love, for he was a gentle man, wise and learned in the Scriptures. And he gave them presents in accordance with his means and sent them all away happy; he also gave sacerdotal robes for the adornment of the churches, for he greatly loved Mass and the Church. He received the Christians of all nations and besought them to live in love with one another, as brothers and members of Christ, even as the Lord had commanded.[2]

Hetum's successes as a ruler stemmed from his actions as a perceptive politician. He was indeed an inspired visionary, and hence was able to swiftly recognize the danger posed to his kingdom by the ruthless Mongols. He also saw the need for quick and far-sighted diplomatic initiatives with the Mongols to stem the tide of their destructive forces from reaching Cilician Armenia. He sought a unique alliance with the Mongols and conceived it as one of the very few remaining options left to him and his allies in the West for rescuing the remnants of the crusader states in Palestine from final and irrevocable loss, e.g. as opposed to the island state of Cyprus which, as we shall see later, was still safely held by the descendants of Guy de Lusignan. The possibility of a strong alliance between the Mongols and the West was not taken lightly by Hetum. In fact, such an alliance was envisioned by him as necessary to form a strategically unified front that would shift the balance of survival in their favour from the uneven position the West had constantly experienced against the Seljuks. Hetum did not waste time and, unlike his western allies who failed to seize this political opportunity, he quickly adapted and exploited the shifting regional political fortunes to his advantage.

Facing the possibility of the imminent demise of his kingdom at the hands of the Mongols, in 1247 Hetum sent his brother Sempat the Constable on a peace mission to the khan at the Mongolian capital of Karakorum.[3] Though Sempat returned home in 1250, having successfully completed his objective with the khan in exchange for his people's unconditional acceptance of Mongol suzerainty, Hetum saw the need that he in person should undertake

the second visit to the court of the Great Khan, Möngü. Thus in 1253, Hetum presented himself before the Great Khan who welcomed the king graciously as the first ruler who had voluntarily travelled to seek peace and alliance with the Mongols. The Great Khan then considered the seven petitions submitted to him by Hetum which ultimately became the framework and the basis of their alliance. The following is an anonymous Tudor English translation of Hayton's account of that meeting printed by Pynson,[4] circa 1515-20:

> How and whan the Kynge of Armeny laft his owne countrey, and came to the Kynge of the Tartas. And how he required vii peticyons of hym — In the yere of Our Lorde God a thousande two honderde and thre and fyfti, Hayton the King of Armeny of good remembraunce, seyng that the Tartas hadde conquered all the countreys and realmes to the realm of Turkey, he toke counsayle for to go to the Kyng of the Tartas and to take with hym his goodes and his frendes. The King of Armeny, by the counsell of his barowness, send before for his brother, Sir Symme Batat, constable of the realme of Armeny, and than the constable went the realme of the Tartas and to the lorde Mango Can, and brought hym many riche presents, and was courtesly receyued. And whan he had accomp- lysshed well all his besynesses for the whiche his brother the Kynge of Armeny had sende hym for, veryli he taryed foure yeres or that he came agayn into Armeny. And whan he had tolde to his brother the Kynge what he had done and found, by and by the Kynge apparylled hym and his men of armes, and wente pryuely, he and his men, by Turky, for that that the wolde nat be known. And he mette with a captayn of the Tartas, the whiche had ouercome the Sowdan of Turkey. The Kynge of Armeny gave him knowlege, and tolde to hym how that he was goynge to themperour of the Tartas, and than the sayd captayne gaue him company to bryng hym to the Port de Ferre. And after that, the King founde other company that brought hym to the cytye of Maleth, and there was Mango Can the emperour of the Tartas; the which was ryght gladde of the Kynge of Armenes commyng, and receyued hym honorably, and gaue hym great gyftes and great graces. After that the Kynge of Armeny had taryede certayn dayes, he made his requestes, and required of the emperour seuen thinges. The first thing that the Kynge required of themperour was that he and his men sholde becom Cristen men, and that they sholde be baptised; the seconde that he requyred that perpetuall peace and loue sholde be between the Tartas and the Christen men; the thyrde, he required that in all the landes that the Tartas had conquered and sholde conquere, the churches of the Christen men — as preestes, clerkes, and all the relygious persons — sholde be free and delyuered of all seruages. The fourth, that the Kynge required of Mango was to gyue helpe and counsell to delyuer the Holy Lande oute of the

> Sarasyns handes, and to put it agayn into the Christen mens handes. The fift, he required that he wolde gyue commaundement to the Tartas that were in Turkey, that they sholde helpe to distroy the cytie of Baldach and the Calyf (that is chefe and techer of the fals lawe of Mahomet). The sixt, he requyred a priuilege and commaundment that he myght haue helpe of the Tartas that were nygh to the realm of Armeny whan he sholde requyre them. The vii request was that all the landes that the Sarasyns had taken that were the realme of Armeny, that after was come into the Tartas handes, sholde be restored frely vnto hym, and also all the landes that he myght conquere agaynst the Sarasyns that he myght holde them without any contradiction of the Tartas in rest and peace.

Hetum's Mongol alliance was indeed a great coup. In February 1258 the Mongols under Hülagü, the Il-Khan (governor) of Persia, marched towards Baghdad and summoned the caliph to surrender. The city was stormed and sacked and the last Abbasid caliph murdered. By 1260 they had captured Aleppo. Hetum hastened to visit Hülagü at his camp and secured an extension of his 1253 alliance with the Mongols. Hetum also, along with his son-in-law Bohemond VI of Antioch, joined forces with Hülagü in the latter's Jerusalem campaign and successfully captured the Mamluk Ayyubid principalities in Syria and Palestine. As a result of this joint military venture, Hetum was rewarded with the return of western Cilician territories which had been taken from the Armenians by the Seljuks nearly 20 years earlier.

The joy of these accomplishments was to be ended by the Mamluk sultan, Baybars, who had decided to punish Hetum for his alliance with the Mongols. His opportunity came in 1266 after Hetum's protector Hülagü had died in Azerbaijan in 1265. The Sultan's armies commanded by Qalawun marched in the direction of Cilician Armenia. Hetum, having lost Hülagü's protection, attempted without success to negotiate peace with Baybars. Hetum and his son-in-law Bohemond VI, both having control over the southern Anatolian timber forests needed by Baybars for shipbuilding, had hoped to use their timber as a bargaining advantage. Having failed at negotiating peace and sensing that an attack by Baybars was imminent, Hetum made one last urgent journey to seek help from the Mongol court of Abagha, son of Hülagü, who had succeeded as Il-Khan of the Mongol provinces of southwest Asia with his base at Tabriz.

In Hetum's absence, the two great armies of Baybars, one under the command of al-Mansur of Hama in Syria, pre-emptively struck at Sis and Mamistra while the other under the command of Qalawun sacked the southern cities of Ayas, Adana and Tarsus. Hetum's two sons Toros and Levon, in the absence of their father, assumed the responsibility of repelling the invaders. The two brothers positioned themselves by the Syrian Gates pass at the southern end of the Amanus mountains, but their defensive position was no match for the might of the Mamluks. Toros was killed in

battle and Levon was taken prisoner. Two years later in 1268, while Bohemond was in Tripoli, Baybars attacked Antioch and slaughtered its inhabitants. As a result of these vengeful military campaigns, Sis, Mamistra, Adana, Tarsus, Ayas and the Frankish principality of Antioch lay in ruins, plundered and burned. The barbarous carnage and the savagery of devastation are perhaps best exemplified in a letter to Bohemond written by Baybars:

> Your Holy of Holies trodden upon by Muslims, the bishops, priests and deacons immolated upon the altars, men of wealth reduced to misery and royal princes taken into captivity — if only you had seen your halls given up to the flames, your dead cast into fire, the churches of Paul and Gozma in ruins and rubble, then you would have cried, 'I wish that God had turned me to dust!' No one has survived to tell you all these things; I, therefore give you the news.

When Levon was taken prisoner he was 30 years old. He was held one year and ten months in captivity in Egypt, although he was allowed on one occasion to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. While captive, his release was negotiated by his father Hetum, but Levon himself was very much involved in drafting the conditions for his freedom. Eventually, Hetum was able to obtain the release of his son from prison but at the expense of a harshly negotiated peace with many painful concessions. In 1269 Hetum relinquished his crown to his son, Levon, retired to a monastery and died a year later.

In the old compound of the Armenian Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem can be found a tiny chapel built in 1266 in memory of Toros. The sources are not clear whether this dedicatory memorial was commissioned by his father Hetum, or by his brother Levon. However, there is every evidence that this small house of worship was built with much care and attention to detail. It measures approximately 2.5 metres wide by 8 metres long. The chancel measures 1.5 metre long and is separated from the nave by its slightly raised flagstone-covered floor. The east-facing, hand-crafted, gilded small wooden altar is dedicated to Sourp Garabed (St John the Baptist) in Toros's memory. It is adorned with a single icon of the Mother and Child (plate 4).

The conch of the apse and most of the surrounding several-feet thick walls of quarried Jerusalem stone are covered with Khütaya tiles of deep blue lapis lazuli ornamentations in floral designs against a white porcelain background. The ceiling is fully decorated with hand-painted religious motifs mostly in gold, blue and brown colors (plate 5). The walls of the nave contain ambries of dark walnut either inlaid with mother of pearl or painted with geometric designs (plate 6). Several mosaics can also be seen in the walls depicting biblical Armenian inscriptions and images such as Christ the Child (plate 7). A larger gilded wooden altar, also east facing, was consecrated in an adjoining chamber built several centuries later as an extension to the old chapel

(plate 8). This later addition was probably built to house the extensive collection of manuscripts held by the patriarchate.

The two chambers are connected by a north-facing narrow passageway cut in the common wall with four tile-paved steps leading to the floor of the old chapel nearly four feet above the floor of the extension. A tympanum in the wall immediately to the left of the passageway contains a small shrine and a ceremonial baptismal pool (plate 9). To the right of the larger altar within the thick wall of its apse is an opening which leads to a tiny tile-clad edifice (about one metre by two metres) about two feet above the floor of the chancel. It houses a small hand-painted, wooden, devotional east-facing altar (plate 10). The marbled floor of this dark and sombre niche is believed to be the interment site of Toros. From the decoratively painted ceiling hangs a simple silver lantern, but the surrounding wall, to the north, is impressively covered with a full image fresco depicting angels in adoration of the Christ bound to an olive tree (plate 11). Likewise, the south-facing wall is covered with intricate frescoes depicting among several motifs the image of the Mother and Child in a celestial setting (plate 12), all reminiscent of the frescoes of Michelangelo.

There is one additional historical memento of Hetum's period that is worthy of mention. The west-facing main entrance of the Church of the Holy Nativity in Bethlehem is adorned by a two-paneled massive door of olive tree wood (plate 13). It was a gift of Hetum in recognition of the Armenian-held premises there for the perpetual practice of the Armenian rites in this church. Although the door has deteriorated and is presently in a very poor condition, its extensively intricate hand-carved designs of 'Khatchkar' (stone cross) and rose petal motifs are unquestionably impressive.

There is no doubt that Hetum I was a progressive visionary, one who did not shrug from the perils of delegating authority on his behalf, nor did he subscribe to the xenophobic tendencies of his predecessors. In an age rife with feudalism, Hetum was courageous enough, as we have seen, to send his brother Sempat the Constable to the court of the Great Khan of the Mongols. This very same brother was also commissioned by Hetum to translate from Latin into Armenian the Assizes of Antioch, thereby providing Hetum's fragile kingdom with a model of feudal law based exclusively on Frankish practices. In direct contrast to the aspirations of his father Constantine, Hetum expanded his political connections with the European nobility especially those ruling the island state of Cyprus. Henry I of Cyprus in 1237 married Hetum's sister Stephanie and, at the encouragement of King Louis IX of France (St Louis) (1215-70), Hetum's own daughter Sybille in 1254 was given in marriage to Bohemond VI of Antioch.

This marriage ended the old dispute between Cilician Armenia and Antioch that had its roots in the issue of the right of succession in Antioch, but it also to a large extent drew Antioch dramatically into the fold of Armenian politics. Hetum's contemporary and nephew, Hayton (Hetum) of

Korikos, became a prolific chronicler whose writings include the *La Fleur des Histories de la Terre d'Orient* ('The principal history of the Orient') which has inspired generations of Western kings and monarchs to remain loyal to the basic aspirations of their crusading predecessors. This chronicle is a French work in its original, dictated by Hayton to Nicolas Falcon at Poitiers in 1307 and translated by the same scribe into Latin for Pope Clement V.[5] In the 16th century it was translated into German (1534), Italian (1559) and Dutch (1563). Paradoxically, the Armenian translation had to wait until 1842. Two anonymous Tudor English translations of the French text were made available between 1515 and 1520 (see above). These were entitled *A Lytell Cronycle* and *The Floure of Histories*.

A Spanish version of Hayton's history,[6] *La Flor de las Ystorias de Orient*, was completed in the last third of the 14th century (1377-96) and was published in Escorial Codex Z-I-2. Various historical works in this Codex, in the Aragonese dialect, along with Hayton's were commissioned for Johan Ferrandez de Heredia, Grand Master of the Knights of the Order of St John of Jerusalem.

So, it is abundantly clear that for nearly two centuries throughout the later Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the Europeans continued to show intense interest in the political happenings of Hetum's time. This interest merits a further analysis of Hayton's chronicle. It offers further testimony to his uncle's great political insights that gave Hetum, as a king, the impetus to act as a wise ruler. Sadly, the crusading states were unwilling to exploit Hetum's diplomatic skills and continued, however unrealistically, to entertain and to prepare for inherently abortive missions for the redemption of the Holy Land.

Hayton's chronicle

What was the nature of Hayton's chronicle? The chronicle is in four books: Book 1 is a geographical description of Asia, Book 2 details the successive rulers of Asia from the time of Christ and the Roman emperor Augustus up to the rise of the Mongol khans, Book 3 covers a healthy portion of Mongol history from their rise to power up to the conquest of Jerusalem, and Book 4, entitled *Passage to the Holy Land*, is a proposal for a new crusade intent on instilling in the Western princes a renewed desire and courage for the recovery of Jerusalem. In the chronicle there are suggestions for alliances, if necessary, with the Mongols, and recommendations for the use of Cyprus and Armenia as locations from which armed attacks may be launched. It is worth noting that Pynson printed the English translation of Hayton's chronicle by an order of Edward Stafford, third duke of Buckingham, who was one of the richest and most powerful men in early 16th century England.

Through Thomas Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester, whose daughter married Thomas, third earl of Stafford, Edward Stafford was a direct descendant of Edward III. Thus, he was a legitimate claimant for the crown of

England in the event Henry VIII was not able to produce an heir to his throne. In addition to this royal lineage, the duke of Buckingham also claimed Godfrey of Bouillon (the First Crusader) and the legendary Knight of the Swan as his ancestors (through Eleanor de Bohun, wife of Thomas of Woodstock). The topic of a crusade was very much in the limelight of the political scene during the reign of Henry VIII, especially in the years immediately following the Lateran Council of 1515, hence it is not difficult to speculate the most likely reasons for the prominence of Hayton's chronicle in the minds of the Tudor politicians nearly two centuries after its composition.

Levon II (1270-89)

Levon mourned the death of his father for three months before he was persuaded by the patriarch Hagop I Kitnagan of Tarsus (Jacob I, The Learned), who had ascended to the patriarchal seat after Constantine I (1220- 68), to accept the crown of Armenia. Levon II, as the new king, began his rule with great dignity and compassion. He inherited from his father a kingdom in total disarray. Much of it lay in ruins and was largely at the mercy of the Mamluk overlords. Levon's main objective as the new king of Cilicia was to re-establish the independence of his kingdom from the intrusive policies of the foreign invaders. Baybars continued until 1275 to harass Cilicia periodically which led Levon to seek, as his father had before him, alliances with the Mongols.

Thus, in 1281, two Mongol armies advanced into Syria against Baybars. One was under the command of Kubilai Khan while the second was under his brother Möngü Timur who, through the joint help of Levon, was able to march in force down to the Orontes valley. There the battle commenced on 30 October just outside Homs. The Mamluk armies were commanded by al-Mansur and Qalawun. Though the Mongols' left flank routed the opposition, the pattern of the assaults and counter assaults left Levon fighting on the right flanks without adequate support and thus was obliged to beat a speedy retreat. The losses on both sides, however, were apparently heavy enough to have discouraged Baybars from further assaults on Cilician territory. But, Levon's loss was compounded by the unexpected death of his son Nerses.[7]

The outcome of the Homs defeat demanded several years of difficult and gruelling negotiations. But Levon was ultimately able to achieve a compromised peace with the Mamluks through the treaty of 1285, agreed upon with Sultan, Qalawun, that gave Levon the respite he needed to reconstruct his ravaged kingdom (document 1). Levon's yoke was heavy and his predicament was sorely compounded by the lack of support from Antioch, which had remained under Mamluk occupation since 1268. The Armenian state was left isolated. But, under the leadership of Levon, it set out to heal the damage. Levon was married to Queen Ann (KerAnn). Their marriage was blessed by seven sons (Hetum, the first born, Toros, Sempat, Constantine,

Nerses, Oshin and Alinakh) and four daughters (Zabel, Regina, Mary and Thepaney).

The treaty of 1285, which lasted about eleven years, gave Cilicia a measure of relative peace and allowed Levon to settle in Tarsus and concentrate his attention on improving the condition of his people. He increased the salaries of his soldiers and approved regular allowances to the poor. He undertook the rebuilding of Sis and its damaged monasteries, and approved the construction of many new schools. He gave a new and extended charter to the Genoese[8] (document 2), who continued to enjoy trading privileges through the port of Ayas which had given them overland access to the interior of Asia. Ayas was an important Christian port on the mainland of the Levant, and the new charter gave it a new lease on life through the increased numbers of foreign vessels laden with goods destined for the Asian markets.

Commerce boomed and the increased revenues helped Levon meet the heavy tribute to the Mamluks set by his treaty of 1285. Levon's financial and material help to the Armenian clergy were improved. His gifts to the *vardabets* (celibate priests) included official ranks and material support to help them produce new copies of all the liturgical manuscripts and of the classical writings of the nation. These latter undertakings were invaluable contributions to the survival of the literary heritage of the Armenians, who had recently endured much suffering in the hands of the Mamluks. As a result of these literary initiatives, Levon's secretary, Vahram, excelled in recording a detailed account of ancient Armenian history and of the contemporary events surrounding the conflicts of Cilician Armenia with the Seljuks and the Mamluks. Vahram's records also give us a glimpse into the character of his sovereign and describes him more as a pious monk than a prudent king. He remarks that Levon's court had suffered uncertain internal dissension and revolt by some of his barons:

> Leon soon gained information of the plots of the chieftains of his own family, but confiding in God, he took away only their castles, and granted them their lives; he left it to the Lord to reward them after their designs.

But Vahram does not clarify or give any reason for the rebellious designs of Levon's own family members. In that regard, we are left in the dark.

Towards the end of Levon's reign, his wife KerAnn died as did his patriarch Hagop, who was succeeded by Constantine II Katuketsi (of Katuk, 1286-89) known as Kronagordz (The Reformer). Levon himself died in 1289 at the age of 53. His sons Hetum, Toros, Sempat, Constantine and Oshin fought savagely among themselves for the succession and at various intervals during the next two decades, each had a measure of success in occupying the throne of Cilician Armenia for a time. But later the marriage of Levon's daughter Zabel to Amaury de Lusignan, brother of King Henry II of Cyprus,

brought the kingdom firmly into the fold of the Lusignan dynasty and signalled the beginning of the final decline of the kingdom of Cilicia culminating with its demise in 1374. The truth surrounding this decline is that, despite the heroic efforts of the monarchs who followed Hetum I, the kingdom had never fully recovered from the punishment inflicted upon it by Baybars in 1266.

Ordeals of a royal house (1289-1303)

The years following the death of Levon II imminently cast a dark shadow over the continued prosperity of the little kingdom of Cilician Armenia. The survival of this isolated nation, as those of the few remaining crusader territories along the coast of Palestine, at the pinnacle of the two major opposing powers was no longer an issue of military might. The arrogant, militarily powerful and resourceful Mamluks fully controlled the four major crusader principalities —

7 *Mai* 1285.

***Traité de paix signé entre Léon III et Kélaoun sultan mamelouk d'Egypte*[1].**

[1] *Vie de Kélaoun*; msc. arabe de la Biblioth. Imp.e de Paris, fonds S.t Germain, n.° 118, B. — Voir M. Reinaud, *Extraits des Historiens Arabes des Croisades*, pg. 552 et suiv., et Quatremère. *Histoire des Mamelouks* de Taki-Eddin Ahmed Makrizi, T, II. P. I, *Appendice, pièces diplom.* II, pg. 166 et suiv. et pg. 201 et suiv.

ونسخة الهدنة واليمين

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

اقول وانا ليفون بن هيتوم بن كستنطين والله والله والله وتالله وتالله وتالله وبالله وبالله وبالله وحق المسيح وحق المسيح وحق المسيح وحق الصليب وحق الصليب وحق الصليب وحق الصليب وحق الانجيل وحق الانجيل وحق الانجيل وحق الاب والابن وروح القدس وحق الصليب الاعظم المستقل بالناسوت الاكرم وحق الاقانيم الثلاثة من جوهر واحد وحق الاناجيل الاربعة التي نقلها متى

COPIE DU TRAITÉ ET DU SERMENT.

Au nom du Dieu clément et miséricordieux. Je dis, moi Lifon, fils de Haithom, fils de Costantin[2]; par Dieu, par Dieu, par Dieu; pour Dieu, pour Dieu, pour Dieu; au nom de Dieu, au nom de Dieu, au nom de Dieu; par les mérites du Messie, par les mérites du Messie, par les mérites du Messie; par les mérites de la Croix, par les mérites de la Croix, par les mérites de la Croix; par les mérites de l'Evangile, par les mérites de l'Evangile, par les mérites de l'Evangile; par les mérites du père, du fils et du saint-esprit; par les mérites de la grande Croix qui a porté l'humanité auguste; par les mérites des trois personnes formées d'une seule nature di-

23 *Décembre* 1288.

Privilége commercial octroyé par Léon III aux Génois.

[Archives de Turin, *Trattati diversi;* mazzo 5, parchem., pièce originale. — Publié par S.[t] Martin, dans les *Notices et extraits des msc.*, T. XI, pg. 97 et suiv. — *id.* par Papasiantz, sous le titre d'*Originale armeno del privil. accord. ai Genovesi da Leone III,* (s. l. n. d.) III à V.]

[Յանուն Հաւր և Որդւոյ և] սուրբ Հոգւոյն ամէն. Այս մեր թագաւորական բարձր հրամանքս է, և հաստատութեան սիգեղ[1], Լևոնի ճշմարիտ ծառայի Աստուծոյ և նորին շնորհաւք և ողորմութեամբ թագաւորի ամենայն Հայոց, զոր պարգևեցաք աստուածպահպանեալ կումունին[2] Ճենվիզացն, ի խնդրոյ պատուելի և իմաստուն իշխանին, մեծապատուեալ վիգայրին[3], Ճնուվիզացն կումունին ծովու այս դեհիս և մեր թագաւորութեանս կատարեալ և հաւատարիմ սիրելւոյն սիր Պէնէթ Զաքարէին: Վասն Ճընուվեզ վաճառականացն, որ լինի կենաց սահմանն այսպէս. յառաջ որ մեր քաղքնուն որ ի մեր ձեռք կան, նայ բաժերն[4] ու կումերկն լինի որպէս Այաստն է, զատ եւ ի յայն տեղեացն նոյն, որ ի սիգեղն գրած կայ, և զինչ խակի լեր ծախեն ի չալկացն սամսրով[5]

Au nom du Père, et du Fils et du Saint Esprit, Ainsi soit-il. Ceci est notre ordre royal et sublime, le décret invariable de Léon, véritable serviteur de Dieu, par sa grâce et par sa miséricorde, roi de tous les Arméniens, que nous avons accordé à la commune des Génois, que Dieu soutient! sur la demande de l'illustre et sage seigneur, l'honorable vicaire (consul) de la commune de Gênes, de ce côté de la mer, sire Benoît Zaccaria, le parfait et fidèle ami de notre royaume. Les usages que l'on suivra envers les marchands génois seront ainsi: d'abord dans toutes les villes qui nous sont soumises, les droits de douane et de péage seront perçus comme à Aïas, excepté dans les lieux qui sont indiqués dans l'acte original, pour les choses qui se vendent au marché par le moyen d'un courtier, ou à la maison, elles ne paieront rien que le droit de courtage:

Եւ Ճընուվեզ որ լինի յերկիրս իմակութեամբ իր կնոջն, ու տաանոյ հայրենիք որ լինի ի կընկան դեհայ կամ ի մեր թագաւորութենէս տուրք, ու մեռնի անտախալթիկ ու անժառանգ, նայ իր ինչքն զարդ ի հայրենեատներոյն զատնայ ի կումունին ձեռք, և հայրենիքն դառնայ ի պարոնութեանն ի ձեռքն:

Si un Génois habitant dans notre royaume possède des biens héréditaires soit du côté de sa femme, soit par don de notre souveraineté, et qu'il meure sans testament ou sans héritiers, ses biens, à l'exception des possessions héréditaires, seront dévolus à la commune, et les derniers retourneront à notre domaine.

✠ *Լեւոն թագաւոր Հայոց*[1]:

✠ Léon, roi des Arméniens.

Facing page: Document 1, the opening paragraph of the treaty of 1285 between King Levon II and Qalawun.
This page: Document 2, a charter by King Levon II issued in 1288 to Genoese traders. (Both from V. Langlois, 1863)

Edessa, Antioch, Tripoli and Jerusalem. Qalawun, the successor of Baybars who had died in 1277, disregarded his treaty of 1285 with Levon and demanded boldly that Armenia surrender to him Marash and Behesni, which were not taken by Qalawun in his campaign of 1281. The Mamluk victories were crowned in 1291 with the captures of Acre, Tyre, Sidon and Beirut.

While the Mamluks were spreading a reign of terror and intimidation with no effective opposition in Syria and Palestine, the other centre of power in the east — Tabriz, the distant capital of the mighty Mongol Empire — was undergoing internal convulsions as the descendants of Hülagü contested amongst themselves for their internal hierarchic leadership. In the West, the crusading fervour had long died with the failures of Louis IX of France in the 1240s. The West was no longer in the mood for missions of defeatism. It no longer possessed the resources, the manpower nor the missionary zeal of the popes of a century ago who championed the banners of the early crusaders. The old reasons that fuelled their crusading spirit were no longer sufficient nor useful amidst the reality of practical politics; diplomacy had now become the tools of the trade. King Alfonso of Aragon, King James of Naples and the administrative powers of Genoa, all were expediently concluding treaties of commerce whenever and wherever possible. It was in this political quagmire that the reign of Levon's son, Hetum II, was initiated.

Hetum II (1289-1303) & Toros III (1293-95)

Hetum was poorly suited for ruling. His proclivities were for simplistic lifestyles in monastic environments, constantly seeking a refuge particularly at a monastery he had built in Mamistra. He favoured the Roman Church, therefore conflicts with his bishops, who insisted on the observance of the traditional rites of the Armenian Orthodox Church, became inevitable. As a result, two years into his reign, he deposed and banished the patriarch Constantine II. Stepan IV (Stephen IV) was appointed his successor who took residence in Hromkla, the seat of the Armenian patriarchy since 1151.

The massive patriarchal residence along the western banks of the Euphrates River had been given to the Armenians by Beatrice, wife of Count Joscelin II. Here, the new patriarch was soon to find himself entangled in a major debate regarding the celebration of the festival of Zurazatik (false Easter). The issue was whether the festival should be observed with the Greeks on the 6th of April, or the 13th as has been the practice of the traditional Orthodox Church of Armenia. The patriarch and his assembly of bishops convened in Sis to consider this. They finally decreed that Easter should be celebrated on the 6th of April. But Hetum's troubles were not confined to ecclesiastical disagreements between the bishops of his Church. There were troubles on the political front as well. His Mamluk adversary Qalawun had not lived long enough to implement his demands for possessing Marash and Behesni. But in 1292, Malik Ashraf, the belligerent son of

Qalawun, marched with a large army towards the Euphrates and laid siege to Hromkla, which eventually capitulated.

Hromkla was plundered and the patriarch was taken to Egypt as a prisoner. Malik Ashraf then turned his forces towards the central territories of Cilicia, but Hetum, in an effort to stave off further destruction, surrendered to the enemy the cities of Marash, Behesni and Tell Hamdun. Upon returning to his base in Egypt, Malik Ashraf found himself confronting a major epidemic which he took as a divine retribution for having laid the Christian lands to waste. He vowed to make amends but he was assassinated for that decision before any action could be taken.

His successor, Malik Kithbugha, saw no respite from the epidemic and thus he himself, like his predecessor, fearing that the pestilence might indeed be a sign of divine vengeance, quickly undertook the restoration of the Armenian losses and the return of church relics, which included the holy hand of St Gregory the Illuminator. However, the patriarch died in captivity before he could return home. Hence, Grigor VII Anazarvetsi (Gregory VII of Anazarba) (1293-1307) was installed in the patriarchal seat and, because of the destruction of Hromkla, he made his new residence in Sis.

After four years as king of the Armenians, in 1293 Hetum, discouraged by the complications of his office and driven by his inclination to a monastic life, found the courage to abdicate the throne in favour of his brother Toros III. He retired to a monastery where he assumed the name of Hovhaness (John) and, donning the habit of a Franciscan friar, became a recluse. But this abdication was in fact only the first of his three disconnections from the sovereignty of the throne that characterized his reign until the closing days of 1303. Toros was a loyal brother and a constant supporter of Hetum. But like his brother, his ecclesiastical proclivities were also pro-Roman rather than Armenian traditionalist. His official reign lasted for two years (1293-95) and, during this time, he relied on Hetum for help and support. Toros's role as a monarch had not suited him well and he had often insisted that Hetum should shed his Franciscan cloak and take up the reins of state once more. At the end Toros was pleased that his insistent pleas successfully convinced Hetum to return and take control.

We find in the writings of Hayton that Otto von Grandison, along with several Cypriot nobles, was invited by Toros to witness the transfer of the throne back to his brother Hetum II. This invitation was an act of Toros to legitimise the transfer of power and seek papal approval as a recognition of his kingdom's pro-Roman stance. Otto was a native of Switzerland but had served in the English court and had accompanied Edward I on his crusade of 1271. When Acre fell in 1291, Otto escaped to Cyprus and remained there. He was well respected in European and papal courts, and as a skilful diplomat, he would have been the obvious papal emissary to help Toros.[9] Soon after the conclusion of this affair, Hetum and Toros received an ambassador from Henry II of Cyprus requesting the hand of their sister Zabel in marriage to

Henry's brother Amaury de Lusignan, Lord of Tyre. Accordingly, Amaury along with his entourage travelled to Sis where the marriage was celebrated. During this same period one additional request came for the hand of another sister in marriage to Michael — the son of Emperor Andronicus II Palaeologus of Constantinople.

Thus the two sisters Mary (15) and Thepaney (13) were dispatched to Constantinople so that the prince could make his choice. Their arrival in Constantinople was delayed by an unexpected illness suffered by Mary which required the sisters to take shelter in Rhodes for convalescence. The two sisters were eventually received by the emperor with great honours and a marriage was sealed between Michael and Mary on 16 January 1296. The emperor also seems to have successfully concluded the betrothal of the younger sister Thepaney to a Greek prince living in some far corner of the empire. The young promised bride unfortunately died during her voyage and was buried in Thessaly.

Having completed the matrimonial affairs, Hetum and Toros now turned their attention to matters of state. They travelled together to the Mongol capital in an effort at renewing the alliance treaty of 1281. The renewed pact they brought back, though politically prudent, in reality was of little value. The descendants of Jenghiz Khan had their own family quarrels to settle, and Ghazan Khan was soon to declare Islam the official faith of his people. However, upon the return of the two brothers from the Mongol court, an invitation soon arrived from the Byzantine capital to visit their sister in Constantinople. To what extent this invitation can be viewed as a coincidence or a politically clever, pre-emptive ploy is certainly an open question and a matter of conjecture. This will be discussed later in this section. Nevertheless, Hetum and Toros made arrangements and departed for Constantinople leaving behind their brother, Sempat, as the deputy governor of Cilicia. But 'Sempat, having thus betrayed his trust as his brother's deputy, violated all the laws of honour and the duties of kindred.'[10]

Encouraged by Hetum's prolonged absences, and unhappy about the loss of the cities of Marash, Behesni and Tell Hamdun to Malik Ashraf, Sempat embarked upon a course to usurp the throne. He managed first to gain the confidence and support of his younger brothers in residence (Constantine and Oshin) and persuaded the patriarch Grigor VII to restrain his loyalty to the absent king. Sempat's efforts successfully culminated in 1296 with him being anointed in Sis as king of the Armenians. He received the patriarchal benediction of Gregory and proceeded to corrupt and bribe the Mongol Khan with gifts in exchange for the khan's recognition of his sovereignty as king of the Armenians. Sempat negotiated his own treaty with the khan, and as a gesture of true alliance he even took in marriage one of the khan's relations. Ultimately, informed of these alarming developments in Armenia, Hetum and Toros hastened to conclude their state visit and prepared to return home. They were intercepted and seized in Caesarea by Sempat's men and

imprisoned in the fortress of Pardzerpert. Toros was put to death and Hetum was partially blinded. This was the second episode which detached Hetum from the throne as a sovereign.

But these self-serving, bloody events were uncharacteristic of the Hetumians who had promoted their collective cause without compromise. Therefore, it was not long before Sempat's younger brother Constantine II realised the seriousness of his family's plight. In 1298, he rose up in arms against Sempat and succeeded in ousting the usurper and dispatching him to prison. The incarcerated Hetum was set free and while he was nursed for his partial blindness, Constantine took charge of the regency of the kingdom until 1299 when Hetum once more resumed his sovereignty. Hetum thus returned to his throne for the third time.

However, he soon discovered a plot against him by the imprisoned Sempat who had persuaded the young irreselute Constantine to help him. The two colluding brothers were summarily arrested by Hetum and despatched to his brother-in-law in Constantinople for life imprisonment. They both died in prison. In 1303, bowing once more to his natural inclination to monasticism, Hetum II gave way to his young nephew Levon, son of Toros III, who ascended the throne of Cilicia as Levon III.

Hayton (Hetum) of Korikos: holy or unholy alliances?

Hayton the chronicler, son of Oshin of Korikos and nephew of Hetum I, was able to assume the title of Lord of Korikos only after the death of his brother Toros in 1280. Hayton was married to his second cousin, the Cypriot Isabel d'Ibelin, daughter of Guy d'Ibelin and his wife Maria, daughter of Levon II. Baldwin, Seneschal of Cyprus (1246-50), was Guy's father. The marriage of Hayton and Isabel was important to the Armenian kingdom because it further strengthened the bonds between the Roupenian and the Hetumian dynasties first established in 1226. The marriage produced six children: Levon (Leo); Guy; Baldwin, governor of Tarsus; Constantine, lord of Lampron; Zabel, who married King Oshin I and Oshin, the youngest child and lord of Korikos.

Hayton appears to have been more than a mere family chronicler of the historical events that began with the reign of Hetum I. He lived until about 1320 yet there seems to be in his writings a deliberate exclusion of major references to Hetum II. Hayton was an ardent supporter of Levon, the young son of Hetum's brother Toros III, who followed Hetum to the throne in 1303 as Levon III.[11] The disputes between Hetum II and his two brothers, initially precipitated by Sempat, were for a time partly resolved after Sempat's incarceration in Constantinople. The catalyst was Hetum's nephew Levon, who was selected to be the next king. Hayton seems to have played a prominent part in the urgency of this selection process. In all probability he was not an admirer of King Hetum II and it is likely that he may have had a

hand in Sempat's insurrection against the king while the latter was occupied on his state visit to Constantinople. Hetum II was not a warrior, but Hayton, in contrast, as was presented earlier in this chapter, in Book 4 of his *La Fleur des Histories de la Terre d'Orient* zealously proposed a new crusade spearheaded from Cilician Armenia and Cyprus, saying: *'enbrascer au passaige de la Terre Sainte, a ce que des mains des ennemis soit delivre le saint sepulcre de Nostre Seignor'* ('illuminating [showing] the way to the Holy Land to deliver the Holy Sepulchre of our lord from the hands of the enemy').

It appears, therefore, that Hayton may have preferred a warring monarch in Armenia who would have supported and shared the chronicler's crusading spirit. There is reason to suspect this. According to the Cypriot historian Amadi,[12] Hayton's journey from Armenia to Cyprus in 1305 was an example of his sustained subversive activities against Hetum's sovereignty long after Sempat's rebellion had been put to rest. Moreover, as Cyprus was a part of Hayton's proposal along with Armenia that it should be a base for his crusading proposal, it is not surprising that Hayton has also been accused of being a principal agitator in the 1306 rebellion of Amaury of Tyre against his brother, the epileptic King Henry II of Cyprus.[13]

During Henry's reign the last of the crusader territories in Palestine was lost to the Mamluks, the most belligerent enemy of Christendom. The loss of Acre in 1291 was replaced with a truce of little substance or political value. In contrast, Amaury had the support of the Templars and the Hospitallers who were constantly seeking justifications for holding their vast estates in Cilicia and the West. Hence, their fervour and readiness for a crusading opportunity represented a dependable source of support for Amaury. Moreover, Amaury had taken part in opposing Mamluk intrusions into crusader territories in Palestine, and on many occasions he had aided the Mongol cause against the Mamluks. Amaury, unlike Henry II, had implemented strong aggressive policies in Cyprus which may have been construed by Hayton as being beneficial to both Cyprus and Armenia.

In 1306, Pope Clement V (1305-14) appointed Hayton a canon regular at the monastery of S. Maria de Episcopia of the Premonstratensian order at Bellapais, Cyprus. He left Cyprus and arrived later that year in Poitiers, France, to accept the pope's assignment. It was in Poitiers that he presented to the pope with a copy of *La fleur des histories*. He remained in Poitiers until February 1308. During Hayton's stay in Poitiers his name was mentioned in four papal letters.[14] In these letters he is referred by his Armenian title *'dominus de Curcho'* (Lord of Korikos) or by his monastic position *'conversus monasterio sanctae Mariae de Episcopia'* (Canon Regular of the Monastery of S. Mariae de Episcopia). In a letter by Raymond de Piis, the papal legate to Cyprus, written to Cardinal Rufati in Rome, the legate makes it clear that Hayton had offered ten thousand florins to the cardinal in exchange for the pope's recognition of Amaury as *'gubernator Cypri'*.

Whether Hayton had developed a close personal friendship with Amaury,

or that the two had become political allies to implement joint political agendas beneficial to Cyprus and Armenia, can only be speculated but the historical evidence seems to leave very little room for doubt. When Hayton left Poitiers in 1308 to return to Cilicia, he interrupted his journey in Genoa to negotiate a treaty with the Genoese on behalf of Cyprus.[15] He then continued his journey and visited Cyprus but his stay there was brief. He returned home and within a month of his return, Amaury exiled to that land several of his deposed brother's faithful supporters.

Henry, who was under house arrest in Cyprus until 1309, followed his supporters in exile and was placed under the watchful eye of the Armenian king, Oshin I (see chapter 5). King Oshin married Hayton's daughter Zabel, and his youngest son, also named Oshin, was given the title Lord of Korikos, who in 1320 became regent of Armenia.[16] Hayton himself became constable of the kingdom and represented Armenia as *'Haytonus dux generalis'* at the Council of Adana in 1314.[17] Even though Hayton by his own testimony claims to have played a central role in giving Armenia a measure of political voice,[18] his covert actions in influencing the political mood in the Near East must be difficult to deny.

Levon III (1303-07)

In 1303, the young son of Toros III ascended the throne of Cilicia as Levon III. Like his murdered father Toros, Levon in all important matters of state invariably sought advice within the walls of the monastery where his uncle Hetum II had retired. Almost immediately after his ascension, the patriarch Grigor VII (Gregory VII) took up the task of instituting a better regulation of the ecclesiastical rites and ceremonies of the Church. He thus drafted a creed and submitted it to Hovhannes (John) Orbelian, archbishop of Siwnik, who had influence among the general secular population of Greater Armenia. Similar drafts were also submitted to Zakaria Zorzorentsi, archbishop of the district of Artaz, and to Hovhannes Ezunkatsi (John of Erzinka). However, before a meeting could be convened, the patriarch was taken ill and died. But before his successor, Constantine III of Caesarea, could be elected Levon took charge of the patriarchal initiative and personally issued a proclamation to the heads of the clergy to convene in Sis in the church of St Sophia to consider the late patriarch's agenda.

As a result, nine canons in the drafted articles of faith were adopted, one of which acknowledged the two distinct natures of Christ (the dyophysite doctrine) putting the Armenian Church in apparent communion with the doctrine of the Council of Chalcedon of 451 AD (see chapter 7). Religious dissension gradually began to mount among the populace in whom some favoured the Chalcedonian principles, but the majority were adherents of the traditional Armenian Orthodox creed. After prolonged discord and unrelenting disagreements, King Levon imprudently compelled his subjects to

conform to the enacted canons which tended to mostly reflect Roman Latin rituals rather than the eastern religious customs of the Armenians.

In retaliation, certain opposition factions colluded with the Mongol khan, Bilarghu, to seek revenge against Levon and his retired uncle Hetum II, whose sentiments were clearly pro-Rome. A decade earlier Islam had become the Mongols' state religion. Bilarghu and his people had embraced the new faith with much vigour and enthusiasm and had sought permission from the royal court to build a mosque in Sis for Muslim worship. Permission was denied. Bilarghu, therefore, did not need much encouragement to conspire with the revenge-seeking dissidents and retaliate with vengeance. Thus, his invitations were sent to King Levon and his uncle Hetum to visit Anazarba where Bilarghu had made his residence. Upon the arrival of the king and his uncle in August 1307, they were immediately seized and brutally put to death.

Oshin I (1308-20) & Levon IV (1320-41)

On the murder of Hetum and Levon III, neither of them leaving an heir, the throne soon passed to Levon's uncle Oshin who was then married to Zabel, the daughter of Hayton the chronicler. He summarily ascended the throne in 1308 and was crowned in Tarsus as Oshin I. No sooner had Oshin taken office, than the religious dissensions and controversies, the legacy of Levon III, erupted in earnest. In 1311 Sarkis, the Armenian bishop of Jerusalem, sought the protection of Bilarghu to secure for himself ecclesiastical independence from Sis so that he may continue upholding the traditional non-Chalcedonian orthodoxy of the Armenian Church.

This self-declared independence that Sarkis implemented provided him the opportunity to entitle himself the First Patriarch of the Armenian Diocese in Jerusalem. As the first patriarch, Sarkis was now able to impose his ecclesiastical authority over the entire Armenian inhabitants of Palestine. Oshin, unconcerned by this development in Jerusalem, demanded of his clergy at the Council of Adana[19] of 1314 a strict adherence to the nine pro-Roman canons of the articles of faith adopted by his predecessor Levon III. But by now, Bilarghu's encroachments in Cilicia had become a pressing problem for Oshin. He had hoped that by virtue of a second marriage favourable to Rome he might succeed in procuring the material aid he needed to conduct an effective campaign against Bilarghu.

But his hopeful marriage to Joanna of Sicily produced little result. Only a meagre sum of money was sent by Pope John XXII as a token of his appreciation of Oshin's pro-Roman sentiments. In 1320, after 12 years of rule, Oshin I died a natural death and his remains were interred in the monastery of Drazark. During his reign he was relatively successful in a small way in protecting the Armenian kingdom without much outside help. Despite his conflicts with Bilarghu, he restored many of the damaged Cilician fortresses and built new churches — one still stands today in Tarsus

although it is converted to a mosque and is known as Kilisacami (the church mosque).

In the same year of Oshin's death, his young son was crowned Levon IV. Levon was only ten years old at the time of his father's death. His regent was to be Oshin Pail (great chief), lord of Korikos and son of Hayton the chronicler (Levon's uncle on his mother's side). The regent wasted no time in safeguarding his future role in the monarchy. He married the widowed queen Joanna, arranged the betrothal of his daughter Alice by a previous marriage to the young king, and mediated the appointment of his brother Constantine to the military office of General of the Armenians.

On the religious front, upon the death of Constantine III of Caesarea, his successor Constantine IV of Lampron (1322-26) represented to the regent yet another ally from the Hetumian line of inheritors. But all this expediency was to amount to nothing. It was too late in the game of political one-upmanship. The kingdom had seen its glories slowly fade and its bloodline fragmented and diluted to a state of oblivion and anarchy. The pride of its military valour was now not much more than a dream. All past defensive campaigns and successful heroic ventures big or small had often been achieved only by the skin of their teeth. But now this tiny kingdom, isolated and essentially abandoned by the West, was on its last leg of survival. Its precarious state was all too clear. Its uncertain future hung in the balance in the face of the Mamluks. This perpetual enemy now under the command of Sultan Malik Nasir Muhammad renewed its military incursions into Cilicia. The newly elected patriarch Constantine IV was dispatched to the Mamluks' royal court in Cairo in 1322 to negotiate an act of non-aggression which at least on paper was agreed upon to last for 15 years. In return, the peace agreement specified that half of the revenues collected by the Armenian customs authority at the port of Ayas and half of the treasury's income from the sale of salt must be turned over to Cairo. In the interim, with a prevailing sense of false security, the relationship between Levon IV and his uncle and father-in-law Oshin, as well as with his other uncle Constantine, began to show signs of strain.

This situation festered until 1329 when Levon, having reached the age of 19, seized the two adversarial uncles in Adana and put them to death along with the queen — his wife Alice. The extent of despair and paranoia was demonstrated by the further arrest of Levon's aunt Isabel (on his father's side) who was the wife of the murdered Amaury de Lusignan of Tyre, and two of her sons. They were first imprisoned and then murdered to avoid possible claimants to the throne. Subsequent to all this bloodshed, Levon IV in 1333, still clinging to the hopeless reality of his throne and to his outdated belief that matrimonial alliances spelled relief, married yet again and this time to Constance of Aragon, the widow of Henry II of Cyprus. This marriage helped neither his standing among the Armenian traditionalists, nor his military coffers. In fact the damage that resulted from his pro-Latin leanings proved ultimately fatal. In 1334 Malik Nasir, alarmed by Levon's closeness to the

West, feared that the Armenian king would pose a significant threat to the Mamluks in light of rumours of a pending new crusade by Philip VI of France.

However, bound by the treaty of 1322, Malik Nasir could only assemble a force and place it under the authority of the sultan of Aleppo who was given the responsibility of himself launching hostilities against Levon. The attack began in 1335 during the Feast of the Ascension. The Armenian king's defeat was not only predictable but also complete. He took refuge in the fortress of Gaban but was allowed to continue his reign only after he had taken an oath that he would cease all contact with the Latin West. With no intention of honouring his word, Levon continued his contacts with the Latins, albeit covertly, but after two years his discovery brought the wrath of Malik Nasir himself, who marched vengefully into Cilicia and forced Levon to the terms of his oath.

Malik Nasir's victory in essence split the Armenians into factions that favoured either close contact with the West, or was determined to sever all contacts in the hope of avoiding further reprisals from Nasir. However, new serious religious conflict at the home front was taking shape with far reaching and dangerous implications. After the death of the Hetumian pro-Rome patriarch Constantine IV, his seat was filled by the staunch nationalist Hagop II (Jacob II) of Tarsus (1327-41). In opposition to the new patriarch's eastern stance, a sect known as the Unitors was beginning to gain momentum under the leadership of a monk named Hovhannes (John). He was a disciple of the sect's founder Esayi (Isaiah) Nichentsi who had modelled his followers in the tradition of the Dominican order.

Their main objective was the total Romanization of the Armenian Church under the supremacy of the pope. Chief among them were Nerses Paghun, bishop of Ormi, and Semon Beg, bishop of Carin. They had gained much political clout with Levon IV, but the king's lack of foresight and his inability to manage the land's religious issues in a more comprehensive fashion had led to threats from the patriarch to excommunicate the sovereign. The threats resulted only in the deposition of the patriarch and his replacement with the more moderate Mukhitar I (1341-55). Nerses Paghun approached the new patriarch with a great deal of zeal and enthusiasm in his hope of gaining the patriarch's alliance in support for conformity with Rome, but Nerses's overtures were summarily dismissed. In disappointment and irritated by his failure, Nerses sought an audience with Pope Benedict XII (1334-42) in Avignon and presented his holiness with a bill of charges containing 117 heresies levied against the Armenian Church. In response to a request from the pope, a meeting was convened in Sis by the king which reviewed the accusations and completely exonerated the Armenian Church.

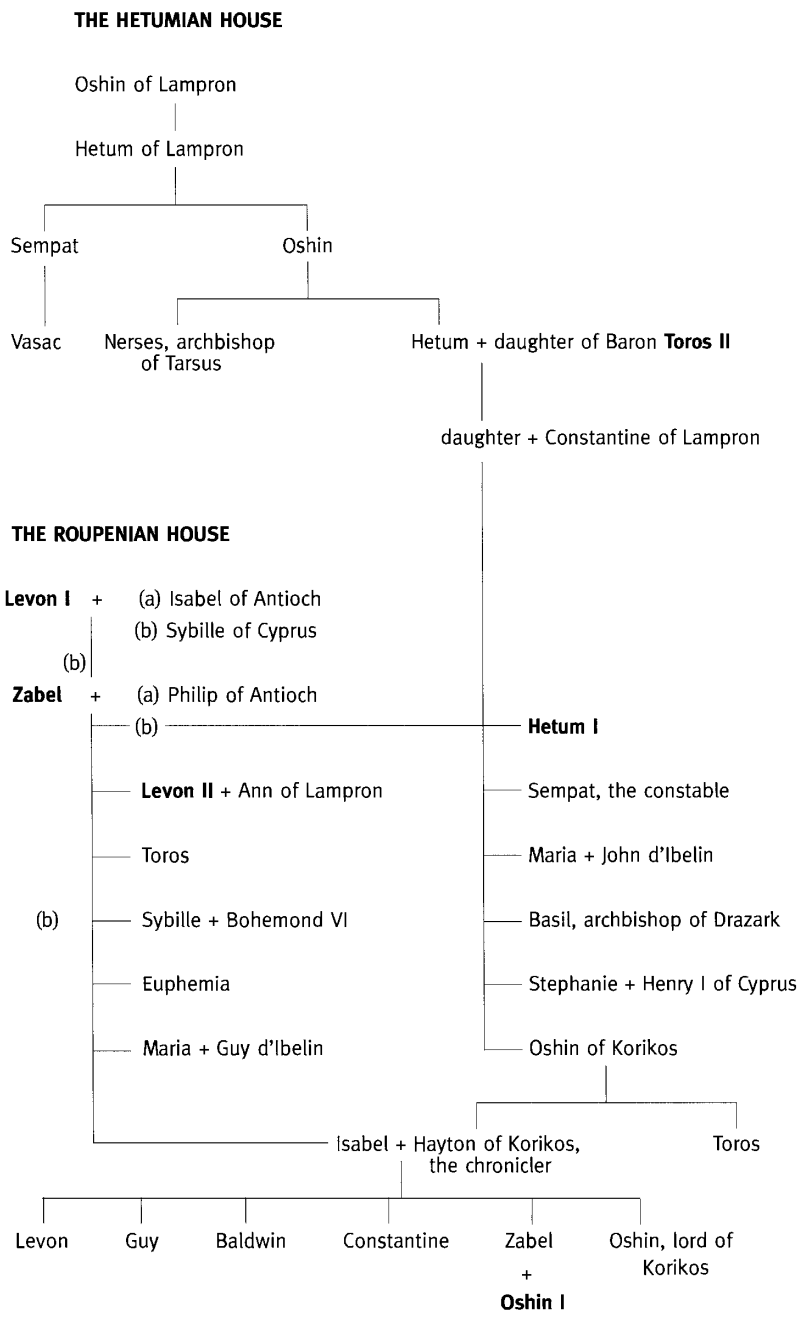
Ultimately, the raging religious strife in Levon's kingdom brought much social division among the Armenians and spelled the demise of the king. In 1341 nationalist Armenians seeking revenge against Levon, not only for the support he had given the Unitors but also for the cold-blooded murders of

members of his royal family, attacked and brutally assassinated their monarch. He was 32 years old.

The history of Cilician Armenia spanning the period from the death of Levon II in 1289 to the murder of Levon IV in 1341, was tainted by classical sibling rivalries and by misguided disloyal political ambitions driven by religious undercurrents. Although the social fabric of the Armenians and their cultural identity have survived the destructive forces of their Cilician history, the true impact of the cultural loss they suffered during this period will be difficult to assess. Despite their obsessive defence of the Christian faith and the perpetual wars they fought against the enemies of the cross, their allies in Christendom seem not to have understood the Armenians nor what made them endure punishment- even when there was only a trifle of hope that victory would be theirs. This lack of rapport is perhaps best exemplified by the following report which appears in the *Directorium ad passagium faciendum* addressed to King Philip VI of France in 1332 by a Dominican friar who had visited Cilicia:

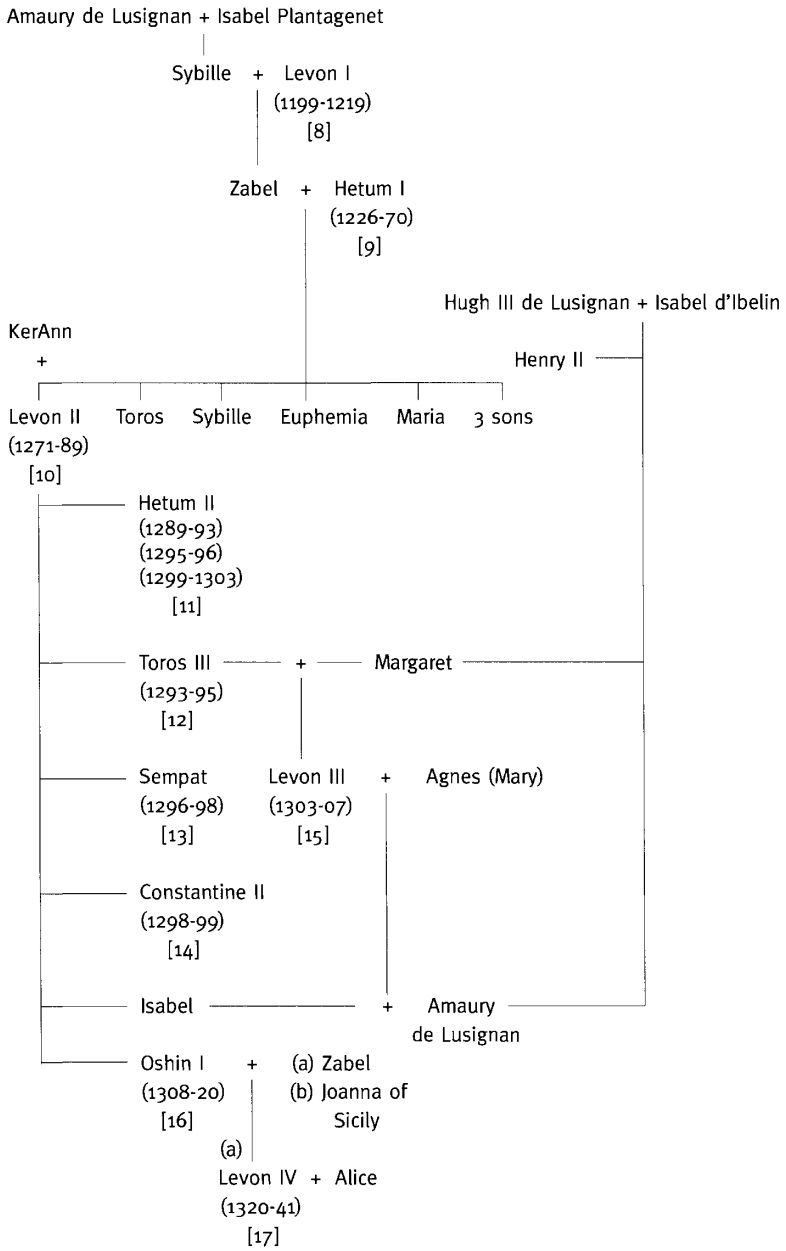
> When hard pressed by the Turks they appeal to Rome but, the leopard cannot change his spots nor the Ethiopian his skin, they partake of every error known in the East. Their king had nine children, and all, sons and daughters alike, have come to a violent end, except one daughter and no one knows what her end will be. One brother killed another with the sword, another poisoned his brother, another strangled his brother in prison, so that they all murdered one another till only the last was left and he was poisoned and died miserably.[20]

Unions between the two dynastic houses of Cilician Armenia



Unions between the Hetumians and the house of the Lusignans

(numbers in brackets designate order of ascension to rule)



Chapter 3

The First Crusade

The first Latin encounters

The clarion call to arms (1074)

> Gregory . . . to the glorious King Henry, greeting . . .
> I, therefore, smitten with exceeding grief and led even to long for death . . . have succeeded in arousing certain Christian men so that they are eager to risk their lives for their brethren in defence of the law of Christ and to show forth more clearly than the day the nobility of the sons of God. This summons has been readily accepted by Italians and northerners, by divine inspiration as I believe — nay, as I can absolutely assure you — and already 50,000 men are preparing, if they can have me for their leader and prelate, to take up arms against the enemies of God and push forward even to the sepulchre of the Lord under his supreme leadership. I am especially moved toward this undertaking because the Church of Constantinople, differing from us on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, is seeking the fellowship of the Apostolic See, the Armenians are almost entirely estranged from the Catholic faith and almost all the Easterners are waiting to see how the faith of the Apostle Peter will decide among their divergent views.[1]

Was the Pope's call 'to take up arms against the enemies of God and push forward even to the sepulchre of the Lord' an Armenian invention? On the basis of the above letter of 1074 of Pope Gregory VII (1073-85) to Emperor Henry IV of Germany, the pontiff is generally accepted as the originator of the notion of a crusade, for the very first time, to the Holy Land. There are, however, grounds to suspect an Armenian influence.[2] In 1080, the Armenian patriarch, Grigor II Vkayaser (Gregory II, the traveller), had appealed to Pope Gregory for military aid to impede the Seljuk Turks' occupation of the holy sites of Christianity throughout Anatolia, Syria and Palestine.

The pontiff's response in June of the same year came only in the form of a letter addressed to the Armenian patriarch. Several sources suggest that as early as 1074, the Armenian patriarch may even have travelled to Rome; a visit which may account for the Pope's specific reference to the Armenians in his letter to Emperor Henry. Grigor's mission would have been clear: the Turks

had already wreaked havoc in Greater Armenia — in eastern Anatolia — and were turning their attention to the Armenian-held territories of Cilicia and the northern Euphrates where communities such as Edessa and Antioch could trace their Christian faith to the days of the Apostles.

The city of Edessa, with a tradition of Christian worship, was also the burial place of St Thomas the Apostle,[3] and the city of Adana was populated by Christian Armenians long before 1137, as chronicled in the memoirs of Usama ibn Munqidh.[4] Therefore, Pope Gregory's vision of a unified European expedition, which was ultimately fulfilled by Pope Urban II in 1095, to repel the infidels and thus indirectly appeasing the Greek and the Armenian Churches back into the fold of the Roman ecclesiastical sphere of influence, cannot be overlooked simply as a mere historical coincidence with the Armenian patriarch's concept of Christian fighting men coming from Europe with the approval of Rome to protect the holy sites of Christianity from the infidels. In view of the waning influence of the papacy over the royalty and the nobility of the mid to late 11th century Europe, the idea of a military intervention in 'defence of the law of Christ' must have suggested to the papacy an opportunity to reassert its authority over matters of church and state.

It may not be incorrect therefore to suggest that the Cilician Armenian clerical arm played a central role in preparing the soil of battlefields for planting the seeds of a 'holy war' that was to come nearly a quarter of a century later. Over two centuries later we find that this pattern of politico-ecumenical intervention by the Armenian clergy in the affairs of the Holy Land, condoned by Rome, was still attracting much attention and debate. As presented earlier, Hayton the Chronicler, nephew of King Hetum I, actively encouraged the papacy in 1307 to launch a new crusade spearheaded from Cilician Armenia and Cyprus.

A Byzantine request

After the crushing defeat of the imperial army of Emperor Romanus Diogenes at Manzikert in 1071, the fundamental issue of survival from the suffocating expansionism of Islam became top priority in Byzantine Constantinople. Before Alexius Comnenus came to power in 1081, the Normans from the west had already driven Byzantium out of southern Italy and Sicily. Also, the Normans Robert Guiscard and his son Bohemond had continued their campaign to capture Constantinople, with the encouragement of Pope Gregory VII, and would have succeeded in their mission had they not been thwarted by Robert's unexpected death.

There were also the threats of invasions by the Balkan Uz Turks in the northwest who had begun to acknowledge their cultural and religious brotherhood with the Seljuk Turks of Asia Minor. The festering domestic political unrest, which had stemmed from the breakdown in relations between

the Greek and the Roman Churches three decades earlier in 1054, had added further complications to the management and control of the empire, especially in the wake of the defeat at Manzikert. The internal threat from a discontent imperial army was significant because it was mostly composed of mercenaries.

The well-oiled, proud, highly disciplined and meticulously organized military machine of old Byzantium had been obliterated in the battle of 1071, and the subsequent Seljuk conquests in Asia Minor had denied the empire new recruits from the provinces of Armenia that had traditionally supplied a good portion of its mercenary forces. In view of these considerations, a militaristic solution in defence of the empire was no reasonable option for Alexius. Under pressure from internal and external circumstances, the only seemingly effective policy option open to him was that of diplomacy. Against this background, therefore, in an effort to buttress his weakened empire, Alexius appealed to Pope Urban II (1088-99), who had ascended to the papacy in 1088, for military help under the pretence that help from the West was essential for repelling their common enemy in Syria and for liberating the Holy Land from the hands of the infidels. He thus succeeded in distracting the Norman intentions regarding Constantinople, and instead persuaded them to take up the alternate Christian holy challenge and march across the Bosphorus (Bosporus) to face the arrows of a more formidable enemy, the Seljuk Turks. So, when the Christians *en masse* marched in 1096 to fight their holy war, Alexius rejoiced in his chance to regain control of Byzantine territories in Syria and the northern Euphrates which had been lost to the Seljuks.

From Constantinople's perspective, the success of the First Crusade would generate a new set of difficulties for Alexius. He had to develop and implement new policies and make provisions for controlling the regained territories in Asia Minor. The projected administrative targets contemplated by Byzantium undoubtedly included the western Anatolian plateau and all of the eastern Byzantine lands in Cilician Armenia and beyond, which were to form a defensive buffer zone for the future security of the empire. However, the principal leaders of the crusaders, to a large measure, had viewed their military objective in the East as an enterprise for material profits inevitably linked to the spirit of the feudal societies from which they came. Their aspirations for wealth did not preclude the possession and apportioning of lands conquered along their route to the Holy Land.

They ignored the fact that a good portion of the Anatolian plateau through which their armies would march had been Byzantine territory for many centuries. The wealth and the possessions the crusaders envisioned and eagerly anticipated to realise from their eastward adventure would therefore naturally become a subject of direct conflict with the undeclared intentions of Alexius. His sole purpose for participating in the eastward ventures was the urgent recovery of the territories Byzantium had lost to the Turks. Alexius

therefore had very good reasons for distrusting the crusaders, and for being apprehensive about the possibility of serious conflicts between him and his allies from the west.

The road to heaven

On 27 November 1095 Pope Urban II proclaimed in Clermont, France, his support of an expedition to the East and called upon his Christian flocks to fight a penitential war to recover the Holy Sepulchre, and thus he popularised a new idea — salvation through violence.[5] Those who took up arms and followed the Pope's proclamation did so believing that their Christian God had a hand in their holy mission, hence they could not fail.

The pontiff's appeal was direct:

> Therefore, my dear brethren, arm yourselves with the zeal of God, march to the succour of your brethren, and the Lord be with you. Turn against the enemy of the Christian name, the arms which you employ in injuring each other. Redeem, by a service so agreeable to God, your pillages, conflagrations, homicides, and other mortal crimes, so as to obtain his ready pardon. We exhort you and enjoin you, for the remission of your sins, to have pity on the afflictions of our brethren at Jerusalem, and to repress the insolence of the infidels, who propose to subjugate kingdoms and empires, and to extinguish the name of Christ. Having confidence in the pity of the Almighty, and the authority of St. Peter, we remit the sins of all those who will fight against the infidels, and those who die in true penitence need not doubt that they will receive the pardon of their offences, and an eternal reward. We take under the especial care and protection of the church and Saint Peter all those who engage in this holy enterprise; and ordain that their persons and their goods be in perfect safety.

As the Pope concluded his address, the assembled audience exclaimed, as with one voice, *'Deus vult! Deus vult!'* 'Yes, my dear brethren,' responded the Pope, 'God indeed wills it; and this day is accomplished the saying of Jesus Christ, that where two or three are gathered together in his name, there is He in the midst of them; for had you not been influenced from on high, you would not have thus expressed yourselves. Let this, therefore, be your war cry — God wills it.'

Europe in early 11th century saw the rapid expansion of feudalism. This 'seigniorial system' was essentially organized around a centralised secular lord supported by clergymen, soldiers and peasant labour in descending order of authority. It was sanctioned by the Church, became a stable and a regulated part of the social order and was accepted by the peasantry as a means of stability and lesser evil in their immediate surrounding areas. The relationship between the lord and those that served him was akin to a contractual

agreement without mitigatory recourse. Their loyalty and obedience to the lord were absolute. The lord obtained his supreme authority, his judicial power, his political rights and his lands directly from the king, all of which through hereditary conveyance were vested in his heirs. He held traditional influence on matters of state, such as in the appointment of bishops, in the mobilization of manpower for war, or in decisions on arranged marriages involving the marriageable males and females of his court and those of his subjects.

These acts of state clearly reflected upon the maintenance and the growth of the lord's material wealth, and upon the degree of his political influence. In France, this order of social organization during the reign of King Philip I (1060-1108) was exemplified in the feudal states of Normandy, Champagne, Aquitaine, Toulouse, Burgundy and Flanders. Outside this social order came counts, vassals and knights, the latter with just about adequate land and resources to support themselves and their peasant farmers. While all of France was a powerful fabric of interconnected alliances of feudal states with an otherwise powerless monarch, the Roman (Latin) Church, which itself had become a feudal institution at this time, began a hierarchal reorganization in an effort to wrest certain powers from the feudal nobility, such as the appointment of bishops or the election of a pope by Rome's clergy who bore allegiances to the lords they served.

This reform movement, which began in Cluny, succeeded initially in forming the College of Cardinals to elect the pope, and ultimately fully centralising the ecclesiastical power in the person of the pope. The success of the Cluny reforms was reflected in the election of Pope Gregory VII by the College in 1073. As a result of this historical progression in church politics, it is not difficult to understand why the initial intent of a crusade, which was to liberate Jerusalem from the Muslims, gradually developed first into the general notion of a holy war against all infidels, then a campaign against Christian heretics, and finally to a struggle against all enemies of Rome. In this connection, the Spanish Christian struggle to regain Spain from Muslim control, which lasted until 1492, was wholly sanctioned by Rome as a legitimate crusade against the Muslims in Spain. This struggle prevented the Spanish from participating materially in the first three crusades to Palestine.

Unlike France, Italy was very much an urban society with lavish trade centres in Venice, Genoa and Pisa. Wealthy and resourceful Venetians and Genoese businessmen conducted successful trade not only with their neighbours in southern France, but also further afield to the west with Spain, and to the east with Byzantium and the Arabs. However, it was inevitable that the French feudal system would trickle into Italy, but understandably only into southern Italy and Sicily after the Normans took them from the Muslims in 1071. Byzantium, just across the Adriatic Sea to the east, was also a target territory for Norman expansionism, but that adventure had to wait until 1204 before a quirk of events would spell the fall and demise of Constantinople.

But, in the late 11th century when the rumbles of the first crusade could be heard, Italy was in an excellent political and strategic position to make its mark in the Mediterranean. It enjoyed papal support, its shipbuilding capacity and naval facilities were second to none, and it prospered with an envious trade wealth.

The political power struggle between Pope Gregory VII and Emperor Henry IV of Germany concerning the authority of emperors to appoint bishops continued unabated for five decades (1073-1122). The emperor cut off all his ties with the Pope and supported Guibert (Guilbert) the archbishop of Ravenna — the leader of the Lombard bishops in revolt against papal authority — who was later elected anti-pope Clement III (1080-1100). In retaliation, Pope Gregory excommunicated Henry. But even after the Gregory's death in 1085, his battles with Henry were taken up and fought with vigour by his successor Urban II. Emperor Henry ruled with supreme authority. He appointed dukes in Bohemia who were his vassals and owed the emperor their loyalty. Consequently, German or Bohemian participation in the first crusade was negligible. As for England, King William Rufus (1087-1100), son of William the Conqueror, was much preoccupied with consolidating the Norman power base in England. Although a Norman whose loyalty was to the pope, Rufus focused his attention away from military adventures and poured his energies into the politics of policymaking, which in the main were mostly anti-clerical and did not gain him favours with the pope.

Pope Urban's call to the Christians to fight a penitential war was not a novel clerical gimmick. From the time of the Dark Ages, Christians everywhere believed in the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins through prayer and penance. The profound promulgation of monastic institutions throughout western Europe during the Middle Ages bears witness to this doctrine. It provided opportunities to monarchs, noblemen and laymen alike to indulge in prayer and penance for the salvation of their souls. But the supreme penance any sinner would have gladly agreed to endure was certainly a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

Hence they flocked to the holy sites from near and far afield, from northern and from central Europe, nobles and laymen alike. Their way to Jerusalem meant either travelling entirely by land through Hungary and Constantinople, or via northern Italy to the port of Aquileia then crossing the Adriatic to the city of Dyrrachium, which could also be reached from Bari in southern Italy. From Dyrrachium, the road to Constantinople was entirely through Byzantine territory. For the Swedes, the Norwegians, and for the Danes, river boats were the transport of choice, navigating the rivers leading to the Black Sea then continuing toward its southern shores and to Constantinople. In each instance however, travelling beyond Constantinople was a perilous journey across Anatolia and beyond down to the frontiers of the caliphate near Latakia in Syria. After the Turks' conquest of 1071, access to Jerusalem through Anatolia became progressively more risky and often

passage was denied. For a feudal society, the sinful acts of war and killing, either perpetrated or imposed, always seemed a necessary function for self-preservation. Therefore, to fight a crusading opportunity to reopen the way to Jerusalem offered them an alternative they could hardly refuse. They were able to indulge in warlike adventures sanctioned by the Church and perpetuate a way of life that centred on worldly possessions of land and wealth. The personal ambitions of their leaders were not unlike those of their contemporaries who had carved out principalities for themselves in Spain, Sicily and England. This point will be mentioned again later in this chapter.

But for the general masses who responded to the pope's appeal, many had different reasons for taking up the sword in one hand and the cross in the other. Among the inspired masses were the mercenaries who enthusiastically sought out combat action whenever possible, men who made their living by killing. There were those who welcomed the occasion as an opportunity for self-profit — these were the enterprising merchants, debtors and outlaws whose foremost objectives were material gains. These men were different from those who purely sought the thrill of adventure to new places and of exotic cultures. Yet, no doubt, a segment of the rank and file in the crusading armies included men who were inspired by motives of piety and religious zeal. Their principal interest lay mostly in the world of saints and martyrs. There were also those who genuinely sought for their families a new way of life, a better life, in a wealthy land reputed to flow with milk and honey far from the overcrowded and decrepit cities of western Europe. But whoever the crusaders were, these fighting men still had to endure hardships, pain and immense suffering throughout their two-year march across hostile territory from Byzantine Nicaea in Anatolia (modern Iznik, Turkey) to Jerusalem.

Armenians have been coming to Jerusalem as pilgrims since the fifth century,[6] and there are hand-carved inscriptions that seem to amply reflect upon this practice (plate 16). These inscriptions are mostly concentrated around the holy sites, the Cathedral of St James and in other areas of the Old City of Jerusalem (plate 17).[7] There is also evidence for the existence of a nunnery named after St Minas founded[8] in 438 AD near the Tower of David in the Old City — in fact, Armenian pilgrimages to Jerusalem may pre-date the fifth century[9] (see page 172). Armenian piety, as demonstrated by the pilgrims to Jerusalem, was equally genuine and inspirational in nature as that of their counterparts who came from Europe.

Their drive similarly emanated from their need for the forgiveness of sins, spiritual regeneration, renewal and self-healing. Centuries later, the motives for their act of pilgrimage shifted and centred instead around the idea of a cultural duty, and in the benefits of a communal recognition. Yet throughout medieval history there was no real inherent religious zeal, nor the fundamentalism of a fanatic, to compel an Armenian to take up arms in justification of his faith. He did not need the power of the sword to confirm his secular solidarity with the dogmatic elements of his Christian faith. To be

an Armenian meant the possession of an inherent right to Christianity, as if it were a divine covenant. His cultural heritage had taught him that Armenia was the first sovereign state to embrace Christianity as a national faith a decade before Emperor Constantine the Great's Edict of Milan of 313 AD which legalised the tolerance of Christianity in Rome alongside mainstream state-sanctioned paganism.

Therefore, the Armenians of Cilicia did not share the sentiments of the crusaders, nor did they see the urgency in waging a holy war on religious grounds. Their motives for becoming the first ally of the crusaders in the Levant for ousting the Muslims from Jerusalem were driven purely by political forces and by their need to protect their lands in Cilicia and northern Syria — far removed from Jerusalem. My reference earlier to the Armenian patriarch Grigor II Vkayaser who in 1074 sought help from Pope Gregory VII to drive the Turks out of Armenian territories, or the 14th century political tactics of the chronicler Hayton in Cyprus, bear relevance in this context. Moreover, as we shall see later, the Armenians of Jerusalem, as a minority population under the rule of Byzantium or the Muslims, had enjoyed a great deal of religious autonomy and relative physical comfort throughout the turbulent history of that holy city. Therefore, the Armenians of the diaspora saw no compelling reason to fight a religious war.

The Armenian hierarchy

The political structure of Cilician Armenia was quite different from that which was brought to the Levant by the western crusaders. The fabric of the Cilician hierarchy was fundamentally feudal in nature and was based on the cultural customs brought to Cilicia by the immigrants from Greater Armenia after the fall of Ani in 1045. Such customs were delineated in the body of the Armenian law codes,[10] which were essentially based on Byzantine-Syro-Roman laws.[11] The Byzantine system of society did not encourage the development of dynastic families; instead they relied mostly on a large class of free landowning peasants. By 1064 Armenia was a Byzantine satellite and, as a result, some Byzantine administrative codes were used by the Armenian nobility. These codes discouraged the formation of a strong centralised state. They opposed the emergence of an all-powerful monarchy; instead they encouraged the practice of tribal loyalty.

The great aristocratic families — the nobility, did not submit to royal autocracy. Their commitments were applied to the welfare of the family (clan) only. Each clan maintained an independent military presence in the district that it dominated but the clan also supported, respected and co-operated with its monarch when it was to their common good. Collectively, the clans ruled the land. Their villagers prospered, paid taxes and established a tradition of mercantile expertise. The firstborn male offspring of a clan inherited the leadership of his clan, and in a royal house, he usually inherited the crown.

Though rare, in the absence of a male heir, a female offspring may receive the same privilege, as exemplified by Zabel's crowning as queen in 1219 after the death of her father King Levon I.

In 11th century Europe, a constable was not a high-ranking military officer. In Cilicia, the title of constable was an adaptation of the old Armenian *sbaghalar*, who commanded the army and was the king's right-hand man in state and court ceremonies.[12] He was generally a relative or a member of the king's immediate family and, if he was not of the royal bloodline lineage, a constable might be honoured as a relative of the king if his loyalty and military obedience to the king were outstanding.

The Church, like its counterpart in Europe, was a feudal landowner. Archbishops were appointed by the king. Although they were vested with considerable powers of authority, they were ultimately subservient to the wishes of the king. As a chancellor, for example, the archbishop of Sis had his private court but only as an archbishop and not in the capacity of a secular chancellor. In contrast, the powers of the archbishops in France and England were given writ-issuing authority as chancellors thus in effect transforming the offices of the curia to the equivalent of an equity court.[13] Charters issued in the names of the kings of Jerusalem during the Middle Ages began with the invocation: *In nomine Sanctae et Individuae Trinitatis, Patris, Filii et Spiritus Sancti* (In the name of the Holy [Ones of the] Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit). The Armenian archbishops, on the other hand, preferred and often used the shorter version: *In nomine Patris, Filii et Spiritus Sancti*[14] (Ա.Հուն Հօր եւ Որդւոյ եւ Հոգւոյն Սրբոյ [*Anoun Hor yev Vordvoy yev Hok'ouyn Srboy*]).

Furthermore, the Armenian chancery, as a consequence of its political and commercial interactions with Europe, became multilingual. Internal documents were usually written in Armenian, but French, Latin, Arabic and Italian usage became necessary — as in treaties, marriage alliances and issuance of commercial charters. The latter practise, which was begun by Baron Levon II (King Levon I) in the late 12th century (document 2), firmly remained an administrative practice until the early decades of the 14th century (documents 3 & 4). These multilingual practices served to generate revenues, often for the badly battered Armenian kingdom, and empowered its nobility to conduct political and commercial negotiations more effectively.

Before we leave this section, I think it is important to note that the feudalism which developed in the crusader territories of the Eastern Mediterranean after the arrival of the crusaders, was distinguishable from the feudalism that they brought with them initially from Europe. The new feudalism evolved in response to the regional milieu in which the crusaders had to administer their rule. But the application of that rule was difficult because the crusaders were chronically a minority population in the areas they settled. Their military resources, which had traditionally fuelled their past feudal estates in Europe, were now limited in the newly acquired territories

7 Janvier 1314.

Privilége octroyé par le roi Ochin[1] aux marchands de Montpellier, en France.

[Archives municipales de Montpellier; *Grand chartier, Arm.* A. *cassette* 17. n.° 12. — Publié dans les *Recherches sur la chronologie arménienne,* pg. 189.

Ի թագաւորական բարձր հրամանայ՝ գիտասցիր պարոն Աւշին Եհաննենց պռ[ոքսիմ]ոս, որ կու համենք[2] որ Մոնբուզլերցի վաճառականք, զոր կան ի մեր աշխարհքս ի յԱյաս ու զոր ի յայսգի ի հետ գան ու գնան ի վաճառականութիւն ի մեր աստուածապահ աշխարհքս ի յԱյաս, նայ գիրենք այս կերպովս տաս խալսել ի յԱյասոյ բաժտունն, որ ի ծախելն և ի գնելն ի հարոյրն[3] երկուք մէն տան. եղիրս[4] քեզ համանք[5]. ի մեծ թվին ՉԿԳ, ի յունվարն Է։

ԱՒՇԻՆ Թ̃Գ։

En vertu de l'ordre sublime du roi, sache baron Ochin Ehannentz, proximos, que nous te donnons l'ordre suivant: Les marchands de Montpellier[6], tant ceux qui sont dans nos états, à Lajazzo, que tous ceux qui viendront successivement pour trafiquer dans notre pays, gardé par Dieu, jouiront à Lajazzo du privilége suivant: à la douane de cette ville, sur les marchandises qu'ils vendront et achèteront, ils paieront deux pour cent seulement[7]. Aie ceci pour entendu. En l'année 763 de la grande ère, le 7 janvier[8].

Ochin roi.

This page: Document 3, King Oshin's treaty of 1314
Facing page: Document 4, of 1321, giving the merchants of Montpellier trading privileges

and were in short supply, and often entirely lacking. Intermarriages between the crusaders and the Armenians compounded the speed with which the Levant feudalism evolved. Title inheritances and royal marriages produced a hybrid society and also opportunities which were exploited for personal gains by the parties in marriage, and often with deadly results. For example, in the marriage of King Levon I's daughter Zabel to Philip, son of Bohemond IV of Antioch, the prince had refused to abide by the precepts of the Armenian Church, and being accused of stealing the crown jewels of Armenia, was imprisoned in Sis and eventually murdered.

Furthermore, as will be discussed in the next chapter, changes in the crusaders' traditional feudalism was inevitable because the principalities of Antioch, Edessa and Tripoli were never totally subjugated by the crusaders. The sedentary populations of these principalities jealously guarded their inheritances and limited their co-operation with the crusaders to political and military expediency and only when it suited their cause. For example, the struggles of King Levon I with Bohemond III of Antioch over the succession

16 Mars 1321.

Privilége octroyé par le roi Léon V aux marchands de Montpellier, en France.

Archives municipales de Montpellier; *Grand chartier; Arm.* A. *Cassette* 17, n.° 12. — Publié dans les *Recherches sur la chronologie arménienne;* pg. 189 et suiv.].

Ի Թագաւորական բարձր հրամանաց, գիտասցիր պարոն Պետրոս պռ[ոքսիմո]ս, որ Մոնբուզլերցի վաճառականքն բերին առ մեզ զայն հրամանքն որ մեր ի Քրիստոս հանգուցեալ հայրն է պարգևել իրենց, որ տեսաք. որ իրենք զոր կան ի յԱյաս ու զոր այլ գան ի հետ ու ի հետ մեր աստուածապահ[հ] ա[շ]խարքս ի յԱյաս ի վաճառականութիւն, նայ ի գնելն ու ի ծախելն ի յԱյասոյ բաժտունն ի յամէն հարոյր[1] երկուք մէն տան մեզ իրաւունք. ու կու հաւնենք քեզ որ զիրենք ի վերայ այն հաւնացն[2] տաս պահել որ մեր հայրն է պարգևել իրենց. եղիր[3] քեզ հրամանք. ԺԶ ի մարտըն ի թվ. Դ, ի մեծ թվ. ՉՀ:

Լեցնէ ի սիճիլ զանխս գրերս:

Մենք Հեթում Ջամբլայն ու Հեթում սինիշեալս հասկըցուցաք զայսոր բանն թագաւորին:

Հեթում: *Հեթում:*

En vertu de l'ordre sublime du roi, sache baron Bedros, proximos, que les marchands de Montpellier nous ont remis le privilége que notre père, mort en Christ, leur avait concédé, privilége que nous avons vu et qui porte que, tant ceux qui sont actuellement à Lajazzo, que ceux qui viendront successivement dans notre pays, gardé par Dieu, pour le commerce qu'ils font à Lajazzo, ils nous payeront comme droits, à la douane de cette ville, sur les marchandises qu'ils achèteront et vendront, deux pour cent seulement. Nous t'enjoignons de veiller au maintien du privilége que notre père leur a accordé. Aie ceci pour entendu.

Le 16 de mars, 4e année de l'ère, et 770 de la grande ère[4].

Fais mettre cet écrit en forme de privilége.

Nous Héthoum chambellan, et Héthoum sénéchal, nous avons fait comprendre au roi[5] le contenu de cet acte.

Héthoum. Héthoum[6].

rights in Antioch were resolved in 1195 only through mediation and not by the exercise of the rule of law.[15] Regarding the possessive manner with which the crusaders ruled their principalities, the archbishop William of Tyre remarked: '*Orientalis enim Latinorum tota regio quatuor principatibus erat distincta*'[16] (The whole eastern region of the Latins is divided into four principalities).

In the crusader principalities of Edessa and Antioch, the Armenians, as a majority population, continued to play important roles in administrative capacities applying the interpretations of their own laws and customs- rather than the crusaders' extant feudal laws of Antioch and Jerusalem — in managing the affairs of state. The body of customary laws, known as the *assises*

de Jérusalem (laws regulating standards of price, measure, weight, ingredients, etc. for goods to be sold), which was originally drawn up in Cyprus to safeguard the rights of the feudal nobles on that island kingdom, contained laws that applied to the principality of Jerusalem only. The principality of Antioch had its own separate assizes which, though it had borrowed heavily from that of Jerusalem, differed significantly in many details. The *haute cour* (high court) of Jerusalem was a supreme judicial body but again in Jerusalem only. Antioch had its own independent high court in which the Armenians functioned as civil administrators.

The First Crusade (1096-99)

The abbreviated narrative of the First Crusade described in this section is intended to provide a historical framework that integrates the military aspect of the crusade with the regional cultural issues that confronted the crusaders during their march eastward through Cilician Armenia and the territories of western Euphrates. For a more detailed description of the background and analysis of the First Crusade, and of the crusades that were to follow, mainly as topics in European history, the reader is earnestly encouraged to refer to the large number of published volumes on this subject that are readily available.[17]

The coalition of the crusading armies that set out from Europe on the first expeditionary adventure to the Levant in 1096 had been given by the Church a unifying sacred mission. The Church however did not interfere with the exercise of military authority that was vested in the leaders of the participating feudal states. Within any one feudally organized army, the rank and file remained strictly loyal and fully committed to its leader only. Though the collective armies fought with great co-operation, they nonetheless remained independent and autonomous military units.

The supreme command of the armies however was vested in a collective council composed of the individual leaders united behind the banner of Christ. This ecclesiastically sanctioned coalition of forces received from Pope Urban II, and from succeeding popes thereafter, the banner of St Peter — *vexillum beati Sancti Petri.* It was a sign of victory given in the name of St Peter for a war approved by the Church. It was symbolic of a holy war, a crusade, a penitential mission to Jerusalem undertaken by fighting men for the deliverance of the Holy Sepulchre of Christ from the hands of the infidels.[18] In like manner, in 1199 Pope Innocent III sent the banner of St Peter to King Levon I in recognition of his co-operation in the war against the enemies of the cross.[19]

The four crusading armies of the First Crusade were commanded by the following leaders: the first, by Raymond St Gilles, count of Toulouse, the second, by Bohemond and his nephew Tancred of Sicily (both Normans from southern Italy), the third, by Godfrey de Bouillon, duke of Lower Lorraine and his brother Baldwin of Boulogne and the fourth, by Duke Robert of

Primary leaders of the four main armies of the First Crusade (1096-99)

—1—

Raymond St Gilles, Count of Toulouse
died outside Tripoli in 1105

—2—

a. **Bohemond,** Norman from Southern Italy
son-in-law of King Philip I of France
[became **Bohemond I of Antioch**]
died in France in 1106

b. **Tancred of Sicily,** Norman from Southern Italy
nephew of Bohemond

—3—

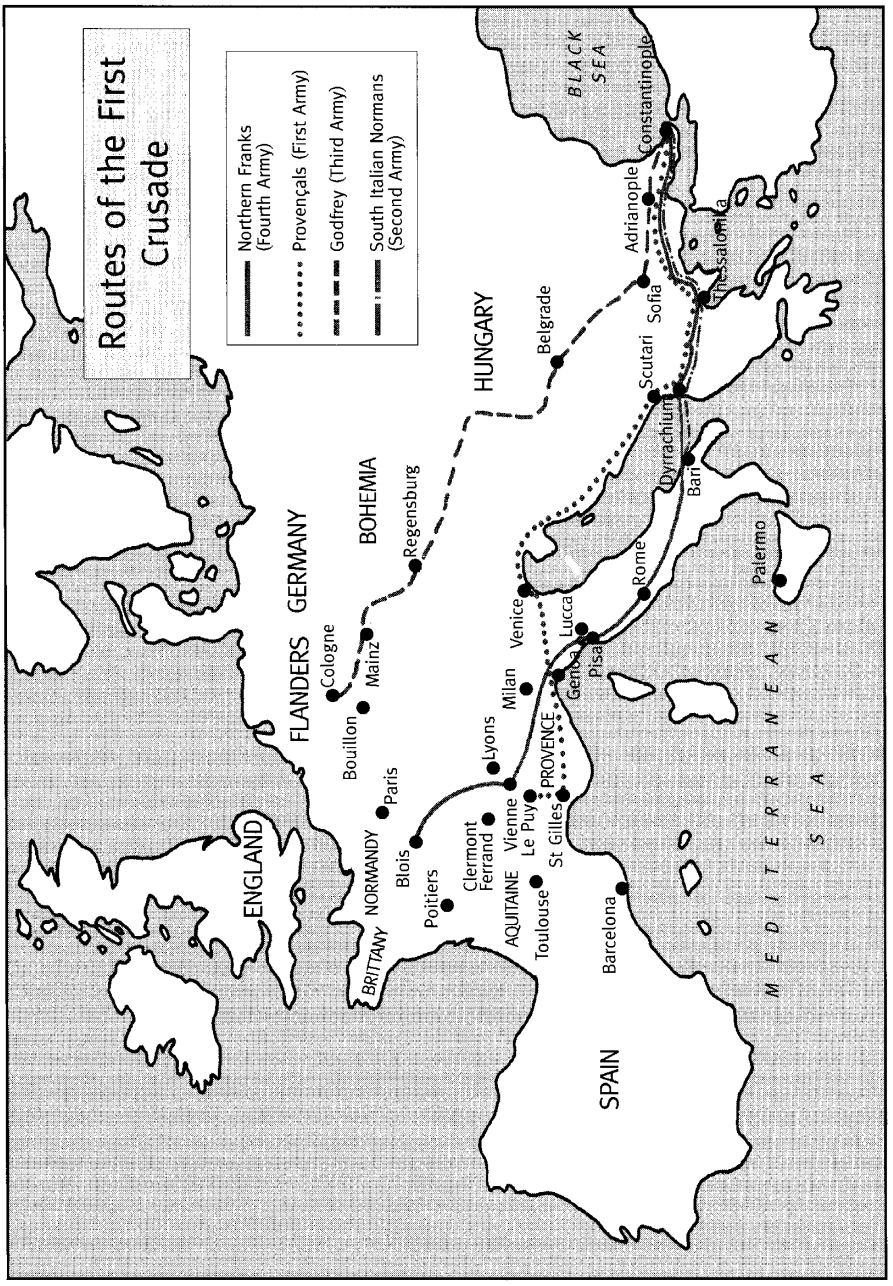
a. **Godfrey de Bouillon,** Duke of Lower Lorraine
died in Jerusalem in 1100

b. **Baldwin of Boulogne,** Brother of Godfrey
[became **Baldwin of Edessa** and **Baldwin I of Jerusalem**]
married Arda, his second wife, daughter of Baron Toros I
died in Jerusalem in 1118

—4—

a. **Robert of Normandy**
b. **Robert of Flanders**
c. **Stephen of Blois,** son-in-law of William the Conqueror of England

Normandy, Count Robert of Flanders and Count Stephen of Blois, son-in-law of William the Conqueror. This confederation of feudal leaders was in charge of an army composed of fighting men and a crowd of non-combatants comprised of clergymen, pilgrims, spouses, men in support roles, carers and cooks. The first of the leaders to depart for the Holy Land with their large contingent of followers were Godfrey and his brother Baldwin, who set out in August 1096 and marched south crossing Bohemia along the Danube River. Then passing through the cities of Budapest and Belgrade on their southward march to Sofia, they reached Constantinople in December 1096. There they were joined by a small contingent led by Count Hugh of Vermandois, the brother of King Philip I of France, who had brought his forces to Constantinople by sea.


Routes of the First Crusade
Northern Franks (Fourth Army)
Provençals (First Army)
Godfrey (Third Army)
South Italian Normans (Second Army)
ENGLAND
FLANDERS
GERMANY
BOHEMIA
HUNGARY
BRITTANY
NORMANDY
AQUITAINE
PROVENCE
SPAIN
BLACK SEA
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Cologne
Bouillon
Mainz
Regensburg
Paris
Blois
Poitiers
Clermont
Ferrand
Vienne
Le Puy
St Gilles
Toulouse
Barcelona
Lyons
Milan
Venice
Lucca
Pisa
Genoa
Rome
Belgrade
Adrianople
Constantinople
Sofia
Thessalonika
Scutari
Dyrrachium
Bari
Palermo

The forces of Bohemond and Tancred sailed from the port of Bari in southern Italy and crossed the Adriatic sea to Dyrrachium. They then marched along the Via Egnatia to Thessalonika and reached the Byzantine capital in early April 1097. The largest army was assembled in the south of France under the command of Raymond St Gilles. His forces left southern France in October 1096 and marched eastward through northern Italy and the Balkans to Dyrrachium and then to the capital city arriving there in late April 1097. The fourth army, which left Blois also in October, marched across the Alps to reach Lucca where they had an audience with Pope Urban II. From there they continued their march to the port of Bari for the crossing to Dyrrachium and arrived in Constantinople in May 1097.

The great challenges

Having completed the assembly of the troops in Constantinople, the adversarial challenges that lay ahead of the crusaders were monumental. The troops were neither familiar with the topography of the land nor the cultural customs of the people they were soon to encounter. Hence they had to learn to overcome geographical, physical and endurance difficulties which would challenge their very survival. But above all, the success of the military aspect of their undertaking required the careful co-ordination and co-operation of the forces under the command of their leaders. They were now to face the wrath of the Muslim Seljuks in Anatolia along their perilous journey:

> At almost every stage of the expedition to Jerusalem, the first crusaders depended upon plunder as a source of essential provisions and supplies. While the money and goods seized from their foes may have assumed an exceptional importance for the first crusaders during the long and arduous march through the hostile lands that lay between Constantinople and Jerusalem, there can be no doubt that the spoils of war always preoccupied medieval warriors. Even during their passage through Christian lands, many contingents resorted to looting when goods offered for sale proved inadequate or too costly, or markets were withheld entirely by the alarmed populace. Once they entered Muslim territory, however, the gains of war became critically important to the Christian forces. Foodstuffs taken as booty often tipped the balance between starvation and survival. Horses, arms, money and manifold other items were also avidly seized and used to make good losses or to replenish Frankish coffers.[20]

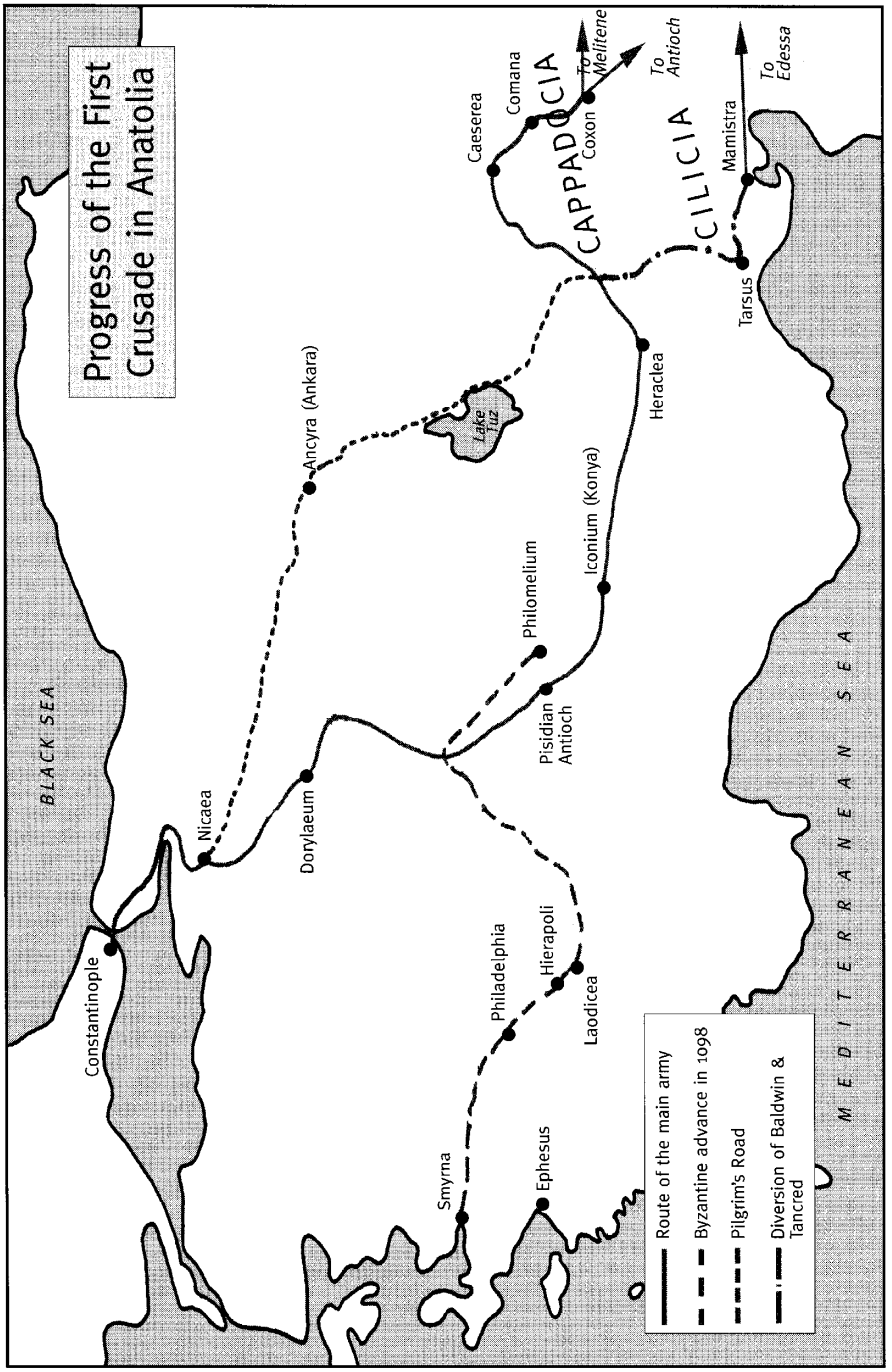
The routes of the northern arc of the Fertile Crescent were linked with those of Anatolia but access to them was dictated not only by the mountainous topography of central Asia Minor, but also by the legacy of its inhabitants. The major road that connected the Anatolian plateau to Constantinople across the

Bosphorus was an old military road that had historically served the south-eastern territories of Byzantium. It began in Nicaea and ran up to Dorylaeum (Eskişehir) in the central plateaus. From there the road turned southeasterly and continued to Philomelium (Akşehir), Iconium (Konya), Heraclea and, crossing the Cilician Gates pass in the Taurus Mountains, it led to the plains of Cilician Armenia. From these plains, the passage to Tarsus, Adana and Mamistra was relatively unrestricted. However, Antioch lay further ahead in the Orontes valley beyond the Amanus Mountains and the Syrian Gates pass. Another route, which branched off from Heraclea, led to Caesarea (Kayseri) through the central highlands and, crossing the Anti-Taurus mountains, reached the villages of Sebastia (Sivas), Coxon, Zeitoun, Marash and the towns of Samosata and Edessa in the upper reaches of the Euphrates River.

By the end of April 1097, Godfrey's army had left Constantinople for Nicaea, the capital of the Seljuk Sultan Kilij Arslan. Upon their arrival, the siege of Nicaea began in earnest on 14 May. The defending garrison was overwhelmed by the crusading forces in a joint assault with the Byzantine forces contributed by Emperor Alexius Comnenus. After a decisive victory in a battle with the sultan, Nicaea surrendered and once again it became part of Byzantium. It was during this siege of Nicaea that the first recorded contact had occurred between the crusaders and the Armenians. According to the chronicler Albert of Aix,[21] Baldwin of Boulogne befriended the Armenian prince Bagrat, brother of the influential prince Kogh Vasil who ruled the Armenian-held territories in Raban and Kesoun in the western Euphrates region. Bagrat was a former official in the Byzantine imperial army, hence his value as a close military advisor and a friend did not escape Baldwin's attention and the two men became close friends.

The victory at Nicaea, which was accomplished in less than three weeks, prompted Stephen of Blois to write to his wife Adelaide that 'unless Antioch proves a stumbling block, we hope to be in Jerusalem in five weeks time.' It was to take the crusaders two years to reach Jerusalem. Indeed, once the entire army was assembled at Nicaea in June 1097, their march just to Antioch through Anatolia was to inflict upon them nearly five months of suffering. They found themselves in circumstances that were radically different from anything they could have imagined.

Their first strategy was to follow a coastal route but fearful of the marauding Seljuk ships along the southern shores of Anatolia, they decided against it. They also rejected the 'Pilgrim's Road' due east from Nicaea passing through Ancyra (Ankara) on its southerly course to Tarsus. Ultimately, the decision was made to cross the Anatolian plateau heading south to the Byzantine military base in Doryaleum.[22] After leaving Nicaea, however, the army was often divided into smaller groups for foraging purposes while marching through the harsh and torturous terrain. The area was arid, water and vegetation were in short supply. Albert of Aix recorded that the army was in for a fairly grim passage through Anatolia. On 1 July 1097, the vanguard of


Progress of the First Crusade in Anatolia
BLACK SEA
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Constantinople
Nicaea
Dorylaeum
Ancyra (Ankara)
Lake Tuz
Philomelium
Pisidian Antioch
Iconium (Konya)
Heraclea
Caeserea
Comana
CAPPADOCIA
Coxon
To Melitene
To Antioch
CILICIA
Mamistra
Tarsus
To Edessa
Smyrna
Philadelphia
Hierapoli
Laodicea
Ephesus
Route of the main army
Byzantine advance in 1098
Pilgrim's Road
Diversion of Baldwin & Tancred

the army led by Bohemond confronted the Seljuk forces of Kilij Arslan in the vicinity of Dorylaeum but the crusaders were able to save the day by the timely arrival of help led by Godfrey de Bouillon and Raymond of Toulouse. By August the army had managed to reach Iconium. Beyond it lay Heraclea with its ample water resources and luscious valleys.

The Armenians living in the vicinity of Iconium were the first contact the crusaders made in Anatolia with people who shared the Christian faith. The local Armenians were friendly and co-operated with the crusaders and warned them that water would be scarce along the way to Heraclea. However small this counsel might have seemed at the time, it nonetheless convinced the crusaders to carry sufficient water and provisions to last them through the parched plateaus of the central highlands en route to Heraclea.

The mutual distrust and dislike harboured towards each other by the crusaders and the Byzantine emperor Alexius precipitated at Heraclea the crusaders' first conflict with the empire. Baldwin and Tancred elected to leave the main body of the crusader army and together follow a southeasterly direction towards the Cilician Gates pass in the Taurus Mountains then cross directly into the plains of Cilician Armenia. This was the most direct route to the Orontes valley and Antioch, a journey of nearly 400km. The bulk of the crusaders, however, decided to follow a more difficult northeasterly route to liberate along its way the village of Augustopolis and the cities of Caesarea, Comana, Coxon and Marash. This indirect route to Antioch via Caesarea was over 600km long and meandered its way through the steep and dangerous mountains of the central Anatolian plateau in Cappadocia. It seemed an unlikely route for a large coalition of mostly untrained fighting men to traverse; yet the choice was made to follow it.

This perilous choice is often considered to be at the base of the conflict which caused Baldwin and his nephew Tancred to separate themselves from the bulk of the army and proceed towards the Cilician Gates. The choice to follow the alternate route was apparently insisted upon by Emperor Alexius seemingly to give the pro-Greek Armenian princes in the area his imperial protection against aggression from their archenemy the Turks. In reality, however, the northeasterly diversion seems to have been designed to engage the local Armenian fighting men help Byzantium restore control over the territories in Anatolia and northern Syria which were progressively lost to the Seljuks after the battle of Manziket in 1071. The emperor's decision was certainly consistent with his appeal to Pope Urban II in 1088 for military help and with his contrived willingness to allow the crusaders enter Byzantine territories in their mission to fight a holy war. Indeed, it has been suggested[23] that in all probability the alternate route was conceived by Alexius, either in Constantinople or at Pelekanum soon after the fall of Nicaea,[24] as an 'Armenian Strategy' deliberately planned to involve the active participation of the Armenians in Cilicia and Cappadocia in his war of attrition. At Heraclea, the emperor must have made his decision to begin the implementation of the Armenian strategy.

As the main army marched in the traditionally Armenian highlands many of the cities in their path forcefully deposed the Turkish garrisons and welcomed the crusaders. The Armenians provided supplies and gave intelligence about local conditions. Furthermore, the local Armenians secured roads, seized forts and helped a knight named Peter of Roaix, who was joined by a small number of fighting men, to advance as far south as the villages in the outskirts of Aleppo. During this very early stage of the Christian conquests, a spirit of co-operation and sharing prevailed among the victorious Christians. Large parcels of land around Augustopolis were awarded to an Armenian mercenary named Simeon who had fought on behalf of the empire since the fall of Nicaea.

The inordinate reward received by Simeon for his early involvement in Anatolia may be taken as proof that the hazardous convoluted march of the crusaders from Heraclea to the Armenian highlands along the alternate route chosen by Emperor Alexius was indeed the emperor's pre-conceived plan which had received his attention and forethought. His success in enlisting the reluctant Armenians into battle on his behalf gives credence to the existence of his so-called Armenian strategy. Also, the possibility should not be discounted that Baldwin's early friendship with the Armenian prince Bagrat in Nicaea was perhaps also connected to this over-all plan which envisioned the forces of Baldwin and Tancred taking a southerly route through the Cilician Gates to protect the southern flanks of the approach to Antioch while the forces of the emperor secured the northern flanks. This strategy offered the added benefit of allowing the friendly Italian naval fleet access to the ports along the southern coastal waters of Cilicia thus guaranteeing the flow of help from the West. It also denied menacing Seljuk naval ships from securing anchor in the Cilician ports along the same coastline.

The bulk of the army marching its way through the rugged terrain of the Armenian highlands successfully took Comana and with its largely Armenian inhabitants turned it over to the care of a Provençal knight named Peter of Aulps. When the army took Marash, their victory was celebrated by its Armenian inhabitants with great pomp and circumstance. The army was replenished with fresh provisions and welcomed by the local prince Tatoul, who, now as a vassal of Byzantium, was installed the governor of Marash.[25] After a week of rest in Marash, the crusaders continued their push towards Antioch. Their continued successes ultimately brought them to the 'Iron Bridge' within reach of Antioch. This was a fortified bridge across the Orontes River with a tower at either end built after the time of Emperor Justinian (527-65). With great determination, the crusaders fought their way across the bridge, and on 21 October they stood before the walls of Antioch.

The presence of feudal Armenian aristocracy in Cilicia made a significant impact on the course of the crusaders' advance to Antioch. In the 11th century, there were six prominent feudal families in Cilicia which had carved for themselves autonomous principalities from areas immediately west of the

Cilician Gates pass in the Taurus Mountains and stretching eastward to the shores of the northern Euphrates. Oshin of Lampron, a direct descendant of the house of Hetum, dominated the areas west of the Cilician Gates, and being of Greek Orthodox persuasion, his loyalties were with the Byzantine emperor. East of the Gates lay the domain of Constantine I, son of Roupen the Bagratid. He ruled in the vicinity of Sis from his castle of Pardzerpert. He faithfully adhered to the Armenian Orthodoxy of his ancestors who had perished in Greater Armenia at the hands of the Greeks. Therefore, his inherent hostility towards the Byzantines was not insignificant. Further east lay the areas around Marash, which were ruled by Tatoul. He too was of Greek Orthodox persuasion and, having been a former imperial official, his loyalties were expected to be with the Byzantines. Still further east along the western shores of the Euphrates were princes who recognized Turkish (Seljuk) suzerainty. They held lands around Raban, Kesoun and Melitene. Raban and Kesoun were ruled by Kogh Vasil. Prince Vasil professed Armenian Orthodoxy and had shrewdly managed to perpetuate his power base by appeasing the Turks with bribes. The Turks in this area had enjoyed a precarious autonomy from the center of Seljuk power in Baghdad where Malik Shah ruled from 1072 to 1092.[26] North of Kesoun along the western shores of the Euphrates was Melitene. Its ruler Gabriel, like his counterpart Vasil, recognized Turkish suzerainty and thus maintained authority over his lands accordingly. His religious persuasion was Greek Orthodox and a former associate of Philaretus in the imperial army of Byzantium. Finally, directly across from Raban, on the eastern shores of the northern Euphrates lay the last of the Cilician feudal lands with its centre in the city of Edessa. This city with its rich and colourful history of evangelical Christianity was controlled by Toros of Edessa. Toros also professed Greek Orthodoxy and was a former imperial official. Under rather unusual circumstances he became the primary figure behind the establishment of the first crusader principality in the Levant, i.e., the principality of Edessa.

The Armenian nobility in Cilicia had consistently resisted Byzantine intrusion in their feudal affairs, but they were seldom entirely free of it. The warrior nature of the nobility was a feudal trait inherited from their ancestors in the historic land of Greater Armenia. This heritage had not only ruled the land of Greater Armenia for centuries but time and again had experienced in that ancient homeland immeasurable loss and suffering at the hands of the Romans, Persians, Byzantines and Turks. Therefore, the independent-minded Armenian nobility in Cilicia were willing to assist the crusaders and, perhaps, even saw the European warriors as their 'liberators' from Byzantine and Turkish dominance. Their reward was the weakening of the empire's grip on Cilicia and ultimately the founding of their kingdom.

The force led by Baldwin and Tancred, which had separated from the bulk of the army at Heraclea, crossed the Cilician Gates pass in the Taurus mountains and entered the city of Tarsus. Baldwin took possession of the city

whilst Tancred turned his attention to Adana where he joined forces with Prince Oshin of Lampron and drove the Turks out of that city. He later captured the port of Alexandretta. In the meantime, Baldwin had marched eastward from Tarsus and captured Mamistra. Now the real feudal characters of Baldwin and Tancred began to surface: their conquests seemed too attractive to cede to the empire. Thus they declared that their victories were achieved by the power of their crusading forces without help from the emperor therefore they were entitled to retain the captured territories for themselves. The two leaders also quarreled with each other for their respective shares of the spoils. But Tancred — with a force smaller than Baldwin's — wisely decided to move on and rejoin the bulk of the crusaders' army setting siege to the city of Antioch.

Baldwin, encouraged by his friendship with Bagrat set out on his independent expedition along the eastern shores of the Euphrates where he hoped to establish further links with the local Christians. As he advanced towards the Euphrates, his ranks increased in number by the joining of Armenians led by two local nobles named Fer and Nicusus. With their help, Baldwin was able to capture two fortresses, one in Ravendan, which he ceded to Bagrat, and another, called Turbessel (the fortress at Tell Bashir), was placed in the hands of Fer.[27] These acquisitions, which commanded access to the Euphrates at Carchemish (Karkami) secured Baldwin's passage to Edessa.

For nearly a decade, Edessa had been ruled by a Turkish chieftain named Buzan, but in 1094 Toros of Edessa, who had once been a vassal of Malik Shah, captured the city from the chieftain and, until the arrival of Baldwin in 1098, maintained his precarious rule there in the midst of regional Seljuk adversaries. His sentiments were with Byzantium and this did not endear him to the Armenian nobility in his realm who predominantly professed the traditional Armenian orthodox faith. He asked for assistance from Baldwin and offered to retain him and his knights for their services against the Turks. Soon thereafter, upon the recommendation of the members of his clan, Toros agreed, as a safe measure, to adopt Baldwin as his heir in Edessa thus drawing Baldwin into the thick of Armenian politics.

As was customary for the adoption ceremonies, Toros and his wife in turn took Baldwin beneath their shirts and pressed him to their naked breasts. Thus Baldwin became heir and co-ruler of Edessa. He soon embarked on his first expedition against the Turkish hold on Samosata but he was unsuccessful, and upon his return to Edessa he found the city had rebelled against Toros and imprisoned him in a citadel. Baldwin promised him a safe passage to Melitene where he would be under the protection of Lord Gabriel, the deposed ruler's father-in-law. But Toros was discovered attempting to escape by letting himself down from a window by rope. Riddled with arrows his body was flung into the courtyard. On 10 March 1098, Baldwin became the new ruler with the overwhelming support and encouragement of the Armenians of Edessa.

The ruler of Samosata, Sultan Balduc, sent offers of tribute, and in return for a talent of gold, Baldwin agreed to leave Samosata in the sultan's hands. Albert of Aix wrote: 'But from that day, Balduc [the Turkish ruler] became Baldwin's subject, a dweller in his house, and one among his friendly Gauls.' Thus was founded the first crusader state in the Levant, the principality of Edessa, and in this context there are a number of relevant observation to be noted. Firstly, it was the Armenian inhabitants of the western Euphrates who valiantly secured military objectives and facilitated Baldwin's eventual access to Edessa. Secondly, the Armenian nobility of Edessa through their own internal political manoeuvring legitimized Baldwin's status as heir and co-ruler of Edessa. Thirdly, it was an entirely Armenian rebellion, without Baldwin's coercion or complicity, which sought the removal of Toros as Edessa's ruler.[28] And finally, it was the Armenians of Edessa who willingly installed Baldwin as their lord and submitted to his unopposed rule. It might not be incorrect, therefore, to state that quite apart from all the other ethnic residents of Edessa, it was the Armenians of the city rather than Baldwin of Boulogne who gave birth to the first crusader principality.

Although Baldwin abandoned all further involvement with the bulk of the crusaders' army — now setting siege to Antioch — the new principality that he had founded played an important role in securing the safety and effectiveness of that army. His realm came to act as a shield that protected the crusaders to his south from the potentially intrusive forces of the Seljuk strongholds in the western and upper Euphrates regions. Baldwin genuinely made the effort to please the regional Armenian feudal rulers as it was beneficial both to himself and to the Armenians.

Earlier, Baldwin's wife Godwera had died in Marash when he was involved in the capture of Mamestra. He now decided to take an Armenian wife and married Arda, a daughter of Baron Toros I (and granddaughter of the Roupenian Baron Constantine I of Pardzerpert) thus fortifying his alliance with the Armenians and strengthening his military position against his Turkish foes. Encouraged by this example, his lieutenant Joscelin married a daughter of Baron Constantine I (and sister of Toros and Levon), and another, Baldwin le Bourge, whilst marrying Morphia the daughter of Gabriel of Melitene, gave his sister in marriage to Baron Levon I.[29] Baldwin le Bourge was later to succeed Baldwin of Boulogne -Baldwin of Edessa — as King of Jerusalem, and his daughter Melisende, who inherited the kingdom from him, was instrumental in establishing the first Armeno-Frankish dynasty of Jerusalem. This pattern of intermarriages between the Roupenians (and later the Hetumians) and the successors of the two Baldwins led to the establishment of Armeno-Frankish dynasties in Antioch, Tripoli and Cyprus, and ultimately those that ruled in Beirut, Sidon, Acre, Jaffa, Jebail, Asruf, Ibelin and Tiberias.[30]

But with each success the rivalries among the crusading leaders continued and grew in intensity and became ever bitter. By Christmas 1097, the cold

winter was fast setting in for the main crusading army camped outside the gates of Antioch. Food shortages were becoming frequent and help was direly needed. Baldwin was able to send large stores of provisions to his brother Godfrey, but the strain on his limited resources prevented him from sending further aid. But supplies came too from the Armenian inhabitants of Cilicia: generous provisions were sent by Baron Constantine I,[31] Oshin of Lampron and his brother Pazuni and by Armenian monks from the monastery at the Black Mountain near Antioch.

However, in the autumn of 1097 even before the crusaders arrived at Antioch, Raymond St Gilles had already gained a foothold in the Ruj valley to the southeast of Antioch. Earlier, whilst the crusaders were victoriously marching through the Armenian territories around Comana and Coxon, Raymond had sent an advance expedition led by Peter of Roaix to the region of Antioch which slaughtered the Muslim inhabitants of the Ruj valley and took possession of the city of Rusa and a number of castles. But Bohemond had established an early claim to Antioch through an agreement he had negotiated with the other leaders of the crusade in the early summer of 1098. By virtue of this agreement, Bohemond would be allowed to take possession of the city if he were able to breach its defences. It was inevitable, therefore, that after the fall of the city Bohemond and Raymond would compete angrily for their rights to Antioch. As a result of the ensuing disputes further advances towards Jerusalem could not be made until a year later.

Nevertheless, the taking of Antioch had been their common objective initially, which in the end was facilitated by a disgruntled rich Armenian named Firouz whose wealth had been confiscated by Yaghi-Siyan, the Turkish emir of Antioch. Firouz was a mercenary in the Turkish garrison that guarded the gates of Antioch and in that capacity established contact with Bohemond and agreed to help the crusaders gain control of a tower to open the city gates. On 3 June 1098, the gates were flung open and the crusaders finally rushed into the city after a torturous and costly siege which had lasted almost eight months. Having allowed the crusaders inside the walls, the local Armenian residents rose up and joined in massacring the Turks. Yaghi-Siyan was captured and killed as he fled the city.[32] Soon after this victory, however, the crusaders themselves were besieged in Antioch by Kerbogha (Corbaran) the atabeg (prince) of Mosul who, acting on the authority of the Abbasid caliph of Baghdad, had arrived too late with his army to prevent the fall of the city. A fragment of a chronicle recorded in Armenian by an Armenian resident traces the miserable state of the inhabitants of Antioch during this siege.[33] But full victory for the crusaders was eventually realised in the battle of Antioch on 28 June 1098 and with it the beginnings of the second crusader principality was thus assured. With this victory Bohemond and his Norman knights lost the desire to continue their crusade towards Jerusalem. Antioch had rich lands, a river, a port on the Mediterranean Sea at a distance of less than 25km, and was close to the newly liberated lands entrusted to pro-European rulers who were

vital for the extended security of Antioch. Raymond, unable to challenge Bohemond's claim on Antioch, joined forces with Godfrey de Bouillon and the two turned their attention south towards Jerusalem, leaving Antioch on 13 January 1099 and arriving in the vicinity of the Holy City on 7 June 1099, by which time the Seljuks had already yielded the city to the Fatimids.

Their way to Jerusalem was clear of major armies and their battles for the fortified ports along the coast were significantly helped by the Italian naval fleets in the waters of eastern Mediterranean. Though they failed to take Tripoli, a negotiated settlement with the emir of the city was reached. The Genoese fleet, which had already contributed to the conquest of Antioch, was now on its way to aid in the battle for Jerusalem. Further south, with the help of a Pisan fleet, they took the coastal communities of Beirut, Sidon, Tyre, Acre, Haifa, and then Jaffa, where they turned inland towards Jerusalem.

On 6 June, they entered Bethlehem and the flag of Tancred was raised over the Church of the Holy Nativity before marching on to arrive at Jerusalem the following day. Almost five weeks later, on 15 July 1099, their holy mission was completed with the capture of Jerusalem from its Fatimid governor al-Afdal al-Jamali. Godfrey de Bouillon was declared the ruler of Jerusalem and was given the title of *Advocatus sancti Sepulchri* ('Advocate of the Holy Sepluchre'). Soon after, an Egyptian army that could not reach Jerusalem in time to help its governor was eventually trapped on 13 August and defeated resoundingly near Ascalon. However, it was to take the crusaders ten additional years of patient manoeuvring and planning before the fourth and final crusader principality was established by the taking of Tripoli in 1109. But by then Raymond St Gilles, count of Toulouse, was dead. He had died outside the walls of Tripoli on 28 February 1105.

The Armenian impact

What has been presented thus far concerning the overall assembly and movement of the crusading armies, from their origins in Europe to their ultimate destination of Jerusalem, is a description of the relevance of the Armenian contributions to the successes of the First Crusade.

Furthermore, it has attempted to demonstrate how these contributions laid the foundations for the evolution of the four crusader principalities in the Levant which were to dominate the direction of eastern Mediterranean politics for several centuries. As a consequence of the First Crusade, the Franks and the Armenians were brought together in a close union but, why was this union more significant and enduring than of the encounters the crusaders had with the other Christian sects of the Levant? Why, for example, the Syrian Christians, unlike the Armenians, were unable to integrate themselves into the ranks of the Frankish nobility? The Syrian Church was viewed by the Franks as part of the mainstream western church. This should have facilitated the Syrians to establish closer ties with the crusaders. The

Armenian Church, on the other hand, was regarded by the crusaders as distinct and autonomous from their own western religious traditions.

The Armenians certainly constituted the majority of the inhabitants in Cilicia, Edessa and Antioch. The rugged mountainous regions of western and northern Cilicia and especially its lower plains were often occupied or attacked by the Turks. As Christians and enemies of the Turks, the Armenians were the ideal ally for the Franks. Their liberated lands served as buffers to protect the crusaders against Turkish assaults from northern Anatolia. The historic rift with the Greek Church had alienated the Armenians from Byzantium which counteracted the empire's aspirations to receive Armenian help and recover its lost territories. The latter element weighed heavily in favour of the crusaders. The influx of the Europeans into the four established crusader principalities remained limited. After nearly a century of Frankish rule, there were no more than 150,000 westerners in the Levant and fewer than 1000 families representing the Western nobility.[34]

As a result, Frankish reliance on the sedentary Armenian populations and other Christians became imperative for their successful rule. The Armenians fought side by side with Tancred's army for the liberation of Adana.[35] Baldwin, with his limited number of knights, could not have effectively ruled Edessa without Armenian help, both military and civilian. The contribution of the Armenians to the fall of Antioch was as relevant as their impact on securing the establishment of that important principality. Although the Armenians' enmity towards the Turks and their rejection of Byzantine domination might have posed strong religio-political motives for the Armenians to side with the Franks, there are additional reasons for the bonding that took place between these two diverse cultures.

Cilicia had a 'home-away-from-home' ring to most of its Armenian inhabitants who, either voluntarily or by force, were moved to Cilicia from their ancestral lands in Greater Armenia. They established a new homeland in a strange land so that their aristocratic Christian heritage could continue. Hence they carved the Cilician landscape into autonomous princely domains punctuated with warrior-oriented nobility which exploited all manner of feudal practice to ensure their own survival and the perpetuation of their order. This nobility lived in fortified fortresses that overlooked and dominated their realms. They fought for honour and glory mounted on a horse clad in shining armor.[36] Is it a wonder, therefore, that their co-operation with the crusaders was to generate nearly three centuries of a co-dependent history? It was not, however, all mutually beneficial. Although a band of Armenians in 1123 under great risk of self-sacrifice rescued Baldwin II and Joscelin of Edessa from their imprisonment in the castle of Kharput,[37] there were many conflicts which eclipsed this co-operation. Annexation of land by force,[38] anti-Frankish sentiments[39] and deportation of residents[40] have been documented. These were the results of rivalries that were typical of a feudal social structure. Acts of insubordination, greed, espionage, counter-retaliation

and murders were the tools of the trade, even within the Frankish leadership which fought its way to Jerusalem. Those who were too weak to lead, or incapable of mustering enough strength to rule, were fair game. Those who were strong and commanded authority looked for opportunities to strengthen their position. Such was also the nature of the Armenian feudal society. Perhaps it is clear now why the coronation of King Levon I under the auspices of Emperor Henry VI was not necessarily a political coup for him as an Armenian: it was his implicit responsibility to the Roupenian feudal heritage.

It is apparent from the evolution of Armeno-Frankish history beginning with the 12th century and lasting up to the closing years of the 14th that the bond between these two cultures was destined to survive the troubled waters of politics. In less than two generations Franks and Armenians both of mixed Armeno-Cypriot stock ruled as kings and queens of Jerusalem, Cyprus and Cilician Armenia. While the Franks of Cypriot stock were *'roy de Jérusalem latin et roy de Chypre'* throughout this period,[41] it was not until the death of Levon V in Paris in 1393 that they included *'Arménie'* in their titles. In fact, this practice continued well into the latter half of the 15th century. Charlotte de Lusignan referred to herself in 1458 as *'Charlote, par la grace de Dieu royne de Jérusalem de Chypre et d'Arménie'* (Charlotte, by the grace of God, Queen of Jerusalem, Cyprus and Armenia).[42] On the other hand, the titles of the Cilician kings of Armenian stock often included acknowledgments of pope and emperor to show solidarity and union with the empire. In 1210, King Levon I described himself as *'Leo, filius domini Stephani bone memorie, Dei et Romani imperii gratia, rex Arménie'* (Levon, son of Lord Stepan of honourable memory, by the grace of God and the [Holy] Roman Empire, King of Armenia).[43]

Byzantium intervenes

The spirit of military co-operation between the Franks and the Armenians continued well into the 12th century. The records show that Baldwin of Boulogne (Baldwin I of Edessa), Baldwin II (his successor), Joscelin of Edessa, Bohemond and Roger of Antioch all launched campaigns against the Turks supported by Armenian foot soldiers ranging in numbers from 4,000 to 10,000 men.[44] Armenian knights and cavalry also participated in many of these campaigns. It is particularly important to note that in 1103, more than three years after the capture of Jerusalem, Bohemond marched a significant distance north towards Melitene to help its prince Gabriel with his struggle against the Turks. But by 1127 a new chapter in the history of the Levant was beginning with the growing ambitions of the new Seljuk ruler Imad al-Din Zengi of Mosul who set out to consolidate Aleppo and Damascus into one Muslim principality. Though he initially failed to instill his Islamic aspiration into the hearts of the people of Damascus, who preferred to remain an ally of the king

of Jerusalem, he eventually shocked the Latins in the Levant by attacking and capturing Edessa in 1144. He massacred the Latins in the city but spared the Armenians and other Christians in a bid to make himself appear the champion of Islam against all intrusive non-native Christians. But Zengi was also shrewd enough to know that he could secure the loyalty of the native Christian inhabitants by treating them favourably.

However, long before the fall of Edessa, the Byzantine emperor John II Comnenus (1118-43) had decided in 1137 that the time was ripe for his intervention in the affairs of Antioch and northern Syria if the claims of Byzantium over the crusader states were to be rescued from oblivion. He marched through Cilicia and by the end of August 1137 he stood before the walls of Antioch. But for the moment, let us briefly consider the crusaders' political circumstances in Antioch and northern Syria which had in the first intance alarmed John Comnenus for fear that if these areas were left politically vulnerable to Zengi's assaults, there would be a good chance that they would be permanently lost as fiefs of the empire. Godfrey de Bouillon had died on 18 July 1100 and was buried in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. On 25 December of that year, his brother Baldwin of Edessa was crowned King Baldwin I of Jerusalem in the Church of the Holy Nativity in Bethlehem. Bohemond I left Antioch in 1104 for Apulia (Gaul) to marry Constance, the daughter of King Philip. He settled in France in 1106 and never returned to the Levant. He named his second son Bohemond after himself.

In 1118 King Baldwin I invaded Egypt where he became ill and returned home to die on 2 April. He was succeeded by one of his lieutenants Baldwin le Bourg who on Easter Sunday 1118 was crowned King Baldwin II also in the Church of the Holy Nativity in Bethlehem. In 1119 Baldwin II took over the regency of Antioch until Bohemond II of Apulia rightfully claimed the principality for himself in 1126 (his father's — Bohemond I—legacy) and was installed Lord of Antioch. Four years later Bohemond II fell in battle in Cilicia when his sole offspring Constance was only a child of two. Thus Baldwin II was once again forced to assume the role of the regency of Antioch.

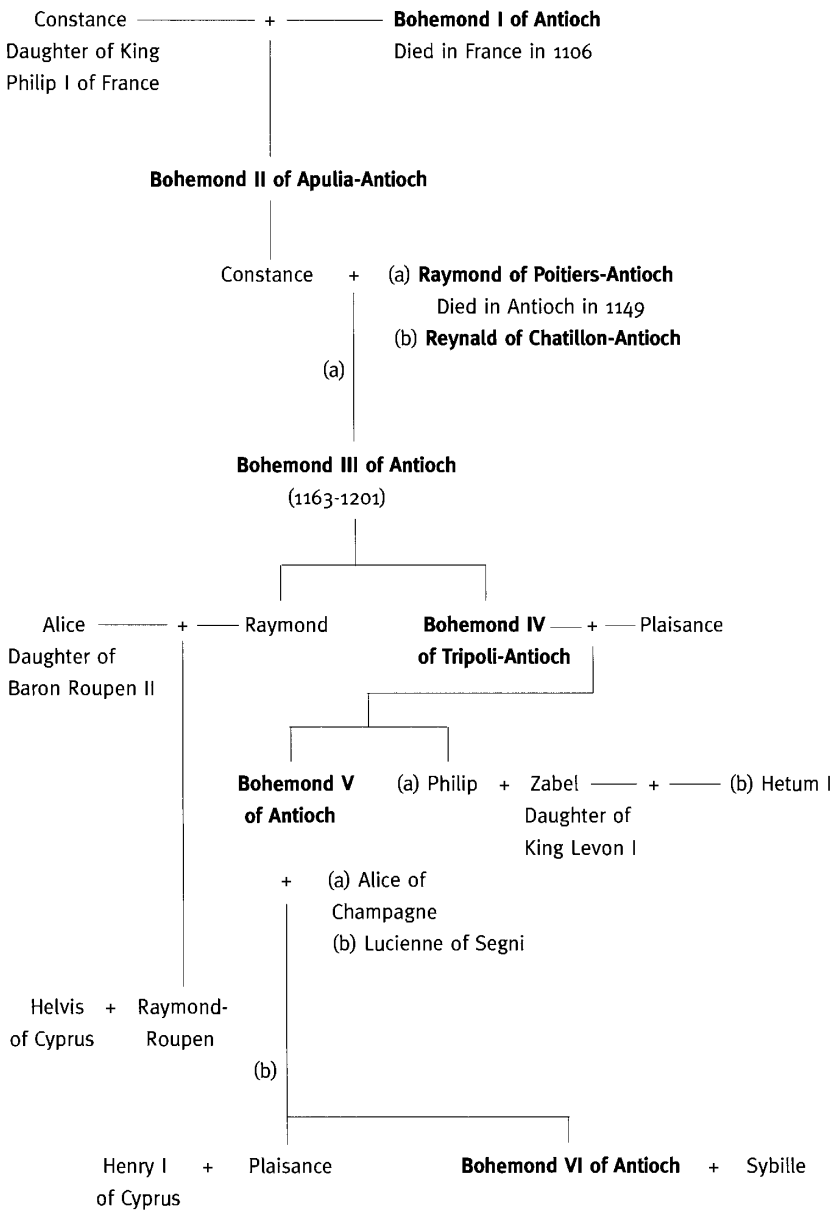
However, after a long illness, Baldwin II himself died on 21 August 1131 and was buried next to his brother in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. But on his deathbed Baldwin had made his intentions known regarding the question of succession. He had designated his daughter Melisende, her husband Fulk V, count of Anjou, and their child Baldwin III, his grandson, as joint rulers. His wish was honoured and on 14 September 1131 Fulk and Melisende were crowned king and queen of Jerusalem. Fulk, in his capacity as the new monarch of Jerusalem, took over the regency of Antioch and decided to offer the command of that principality to Raymond of Poitiers, son of the duke of Aquitaine. Raymond arrived in Antioch in 1136 and married the heiress of Antioch Constance, who was then barely nine years of age. This

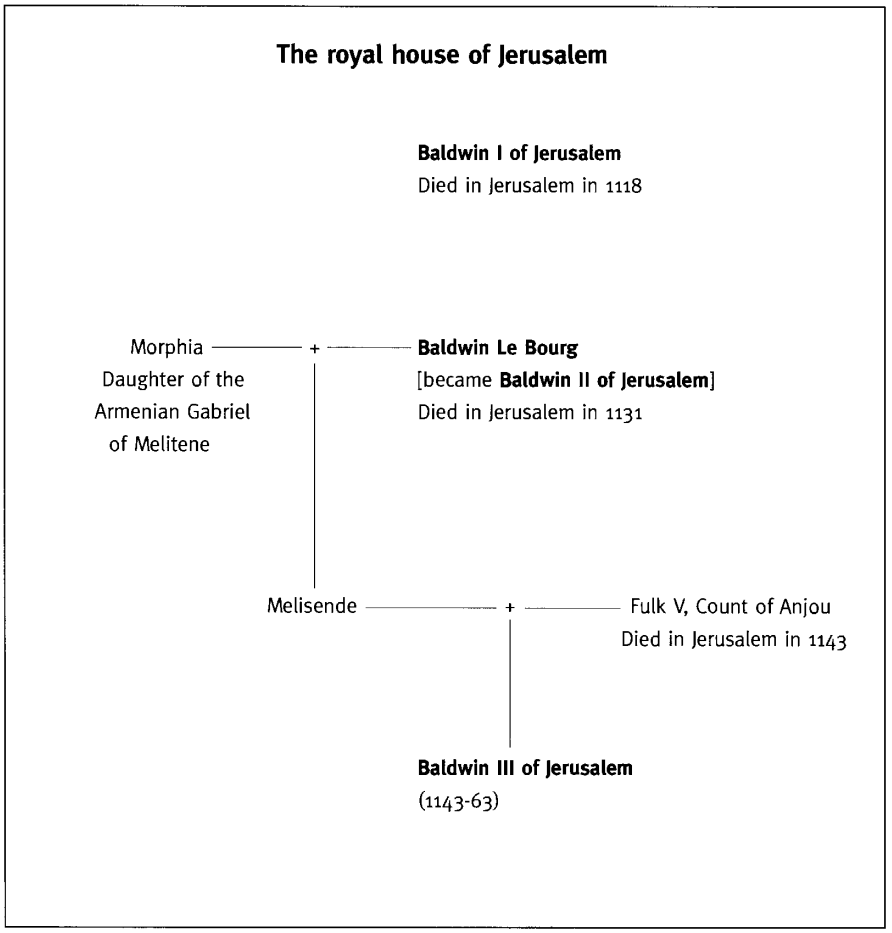
apparent leadership vacuum left in Antioch and Jerusalem by the absence of ruling monarchs as descendants of the earliest crusader kings of these principalities is what compelled the emperor John Comnenus to exploit his imperial authority in Antioch and prepare for the eventuality of fighting Zengi.

Neither Raymond nor Fulk dared challenge the emperor, fearing Zengi's wrath might be soon upon them. Antioch reluctantly opened its doors to the emperor and submitted to his authority thus ensuring once more the empire's suzerainty over that city. In March 1138, with military support from both Raymond and Fulk, the emperor launched his attack against Zengi in Aleppo but the offensive was unsuccessful. Consequently, the emperor turned his attention towards Anatolia and fought the Turks there for a few years. He returned to Cilicia in 1142 with force and died there in April 1143 from injuries received during a hunting accident. A few months later Fulk himself sustained hunting injuries and died on 10 November 1143.

With John Comnenus dead and the commands of Edessa and Jerusalem uncertain in the hands of Queen Melisende, Zengi took advantage of this window of opportunity and on Christmas Eve 1144 after a siege of four weeks he took the city of Edessa. His reign there was short-lived for in 1146, still in the early stages of his leadership, he was assassinated. His succeessor, his son Nur al-Din, unlike his father embarked upon a concerted effort to eradicate the Christian Syrian and Armenian inhabitants of Edessa to ensure that it was lost to the Franks beyond recovery, and then in the summer of 1149 he set siege to the fortress of Inab near Antioch. Raymond of Poitiers (Constance's consort) and his knights went to its relief but they were defeated and Raymond himself was killed.

The royal house of Antioch




The royal house of Jerusalem
Baldwin I of Jerusalem
Died in Jerusalem in 1118
Morphia
Daughter of the
Armenian Gabriel
of Melitene
+
Baldwin Le Bourg
[became Baldwin II of Jerusalem]
Died in Jerusalem in 1131
Melisende
+
Fulk V, Count of Anjou
Died in Jerusalem in 1143
Baldwin III of Jerusalem
(1143-63)

Chapter 4

ARMENIA

The new inheritance

Baron Toros I (1099-1129)

In 1102 Constantine I of Vahka, son of Roupen I, died. He, in his capacity as an Armenian Christian ruler in the Levant, had helped the forces of the First Crusade maintain the siege of Antioch until it fell to the crusaders. He left two sons, Toros and Levon. Toros, or Theodoros, succeeded his father and ruled from the fortresses of Vahka and Pardzerpert. Toros proved himself a brave and an able ruler. In 1107, encouraged by Tancred and by the Latin sweep across Cilicia, he followed the course of the Pyramus River and captured from Byzantium the cities of Anazarba and Sis and commemorated his victories by constructing a church in the former, which he consecrated St Zoravark, to house the ancestral treasures of King Gagik II. His new-found alliance with the leaders of the First Crusade, especially through the marriages of his sister and daughter to Joscelin and Baldwin I, respectively, helped him rule his feudal holdings with commanding authority.

Toros was, as were his predecessors before him and his successors after him, plagued by the nomadic Turks who were harassing him from the north but were driven back and inflicted with enough damage to have Daphar, their chief, resolve to return to avenge the blow to his prestige. In 1108 Daphar did in fact return by entering the province of Hasamansur and ravaging the lands around Melitene.[1] Here for Toros the help of his Armenian compatriot Basilius the Crafty became indispensable. Basilius governed possessions in the vicinity of Marash and Kesoun with the co-operation of his brother Shahan Zoravar (General Shahan). They were both shrewd and experienced tactical fighters. The forces which Basilius assembled to counter-attack Daphar were divided into four groups. He gave the command of the first to his uncle Peter; the second to Basilius Degha (Degha Vasil) of Kamsarakan, one of the great Armenian nakharar clans; the third to Tigran of a noble Cilician family and the fourth he commanded himself. In addition to Basilius's forces there also came the help of a chief named Abul-Asad, son of Takhat of the province of Taron, who assisted with a group of cavalrymen with himself at the head. They attacked Daphar from four different directions and achieved a

resounding victory near the castle of Harthan. A large number of Armenian captives taken earlier by Daphar were released and sent back to their homes. Basilius, happy with his successes, nobly shared with Toros the spoils which were taken from the Turks.

For several years Toros enjoyed the bounty of his successes in the security of his strongholds. But his tranquillity was again disturbed in 1111 by yet another intrusion by Malik Shah of Iconium (Konya). On this occasion Toros's two commanders, Tigran and Abul-Asad were killed in battle. Saddened by this loss, Toros's brother Baron Levon was so enraged that he launched a savage attack against the Turks and drove them into retreat. In retaliation, the Turkish hordes in their flight laid siege to the fortress of Zovk but were badly beaten by the Armenian garrison there commanded by Apirat Pahlavuni, grandson of Grigor Magistros and father to the brothers Grigor and Nerses the Gracious (Shnorhali). Apirat was killed during this conflict, and a year later in 1112 the great commander Basilius died of natural causes leaving his possessions to be governed by Degha Vasil, who wasted no time in marrying in 1116 Toros's niece, a daughter of Baron Levon.

One of the many heroic acts of Toros during the year of 1112 was the avenging of the death of King Gagik II, the Bagratid, by killing his assassins. This act of revenge has often been used by chroniclers of the 12th century, such as Vahram, Matthew of Edessa and Kirakos of Gandzak, as direct evidence connecting the Roupenians to the Bagratid lineage. They tell us that Toros relentlessly pursued the three sons of Mandale, the murderers of Gagik, and laid an ambush for them at their castle, Cyzistra (Kizistra). At an opportune time, his infantry surprised the garrison and occupied the castle, plundered it then took blood revenge by killing all its inhabitants. The three brothers were taken captive and forced to produce Gagik's kingly sword and his royal apparel taken at the time of the murder. One of the brothers seeing the helplessness of his predicament committed suicide by throwing himself from the castle wall. The second was beaten to death by Toros who justified his brutal action by exclaiming that such monsters did not deserve to perish by the quick plunge of a dagger. Toros returned to his fortress at Vahka bringing with him the third Mandale brother as a captive.

Soon after the vengeful act of 1112, the patriarch Parsegh I of Ani died at the desert monastery of 'Shughr.' Parsegh had been the spiritual leader of the land for 31 years, eight of which were spent in the service of Patriarch Grigor (Gregory) II Vkayaser. Grigor III Pahlavuni, son of Apirat, succeeded Parsegh as the next patriarch. He was only 20 years old at the time of his elevation to the patriarchal office, but his piety, wisdom and learning were unequalled by his contemporaries. However, the archbishop of Aghtamar, David, son of Thornik, refused to acknowledge Grigor as the new patriarch for he believed himself, as an older leader, to be the rightful successor. He sought and secured the support of five of his bishops who promoted David's position and eventually in 1114 consecrated and proclaimed him anti-patriarch at

Aghtamar. Upon learning of this event, Grigor convened a meeting of the clergy who unanimously declared David's action heretical and rejected him as patriarch. The assembly also enacted the requirement of unanimous consent of the four bishoprics (Bujney, Haghbat, Thaddeus and Stathev) as a pre-requisite for the election of all future patriarchs.

In 1114 a papal envoy from Rome arrived in Antioch on its way to Jerusalem. Grigor III was invited to Antioch and was involved in discussions on doctrinal matters in which he seems to have excelled. He accompanied the envoy to Jerusalem and upon his return he settled at the fortress of Zovk. In recognition of his erudite personality he received from Pope Paschal II (1099-1118) a pontifical sceptre and gown, and letters of commendation. Grigor acknowledged the pope for his kindness and for the honour that had been bestowed upon him. In 1125 he finally moved the seat of his spiritual government from Shughr and installed it in Zovk, where he also consecrated his brother Nerses Shnorhali as a bishop.

Toros was distraught with the conflicts that he witnessed amongst his church leaders. He apparently was a God-fearing religious ruler. During his time he bestowed favours and gave gifts and money to many monasteries for their decoration and adornment, in particular those of Drazark (Trassarg) and Mashgevar. He was pre-occupied with maintaining a constant vigil against Turkish invaders and determined to establish a firm, authoritative footing in the land of his paternal inheritance. As a result, despite his matrimonial connections with the crusaders, he seems to have remained rather isolated from the main scheme of Latin events in the proximity of his world, with the exception of one occasion in 1118 when he sent a contingent of troops under the command of his brother Levon to help Roger of Antioch in the capture of Azaz, situated north of Aleppo on the road between Antioch and Tell Bashir. It had been regained by the Muslims shortly after Tancred's death who had possessed the city from the time the crusaders first entered the regions of northern Syria two decades earlier. In 1129, after reigning 23 years, Toros died without a male heir and was buried in the monastery of Drazark. However, Vahram the historian tells us that after the death of Baron Toros, a lone son was cast into prison and poisoned to death.

Baron Levon I (1129-37)

During the years preceding Zengi's conquest of Edessa, Prince (Baron) Levon I, son of Constantine I, learned to exploit the open, yet restrained, hostilities between Byzantium and the Frankish principalities of Edessa and Antioch. On the surface, he maintained good relations with Byzantium and was honoured with the exalted title of 'Sebastos'[2] (local ruler). But, beginning in the year 1131 Levon launched from his Armenian strongholds in the Taurus Mountains a series of systematic assaults on Byzantine and Frankish-dominated Armenian settlements below him on the plains of Cilicia. After a brief unsuccessful siege of

Seleucia he seized the towns of Korikos, Tarsus, Adana and Mamistra, and by 1135 he had also taken Serventikar.[3] Most of his successes benefitted from Byzantium's pre-occupation with Zengi's threats from Aleppo and the lack of effective Frankish rule, especially in Antioch. He unsuccessfully challenged the newly installed commander of Antioch, Raymond of Poitiers, for the possession of that city and was, eventually, defeated decisively by Emperor John Comnenus in 1137.

John Comnenus had come to Cilicia with a full force in the early summer of 1137 on his way to take Antioch,[4] which, ever since the beginning of the First Crusade, was to have been turned over by the Franks to Byzantine rule according to the 'customary oath of the Latins' professed to the emperor. His army marched south along Byzantine-held routes leading to the coastal town of Seleucia. They then successively retook Seleucia, Korikos, Tarsus, Mamistra, Adana, Tell Hamdun and Anazarba. Satisfied that most of the Cilician plain was once more securely under Byzantine control, the emperor turned his forces south towards the Gulf of Alexandretta and Antioch. As mentioned earlier, Antioch, recognizing the overwhelming power of the emperor, swiftly capitulated. However, the emperor's failed assault against Zengi at Aleppo in 1138 gave him the excuse to return to Levon's Armenian strongholds in the Tauruses where he successfully laid siege to Gaban and Vahka. Baron Levon and two of his sons, Toros II (The Great) and Roupen, were taken captive and imprisoned in Constantinople where Levon died shortly thereafter.[5] Roupen was blinded and later murdered.

The second crusade (1145-49)

Edessa was the first Latin principality to be founded in the Levant and the first to fall. What were the implications of the fall of Edessa? The reduction of Edessa's Christian population was not welcome news in the West. Edessa was pivotal for the control of the fertile agricultural lands along the eastern shores of the Euphrates. The Franks' regional economy depended upon stable Christian populations that would cultivate these lands, which in turn would encourage the further influx of new settlers. Any threat of reduction in the number of Christian settlers of the region would undesirably enhance the Muslim power wielded by Nur al-Din from Aleppo and thus endanger the security of the Christian principality of Antioch. The direct impact of Nur al-Din's aggression on the future welfare of the Latin East was coming painfully into focus. The fall of Edessa represented the first major defeat for the Franks since the unprecedented triumphs they enjoyed throughout the First Crusade. Could this be allowed to continue? It was unlikely that Raymond of Antioch would not seek outside help to counter the growing threat of Nur al-Din aimed not just at Christians in general but also at the regional dominance of Antioch as a Christian base.

Shortly after ascending the pontifical throne in Rome, Pope Eugenius III

(1145-53) received envoys from the East pleading for help in countering the tide of the new Muslim threat. These envoys included Bishop Hugo of Jabala and an envoy of Armenian bishops who, it is purported, had offered the union of the Armenian Orthodox Church with Rome.[6] This established pattern of Armenian tactics used for enlisting the help of Rome for their political survival quite distinctly devoid of any real unionist undertones became clearly apparent nearly half a century later during the rule of Baron Levon II (1199-1219), a practice that continued well into the 14th century.

Whilst the smell of a new crusade to the East was definitely permeating the Byzantine air, the new emperor Manuel I Comnenus, again with rooted Byzantine interests in Cilicia and northern Syria, did not waste time in making his influence felt. He pre-emptively launched his offensive not against Edessa but against the Seljuks in Asia Minor closer to home. No doubt successes further afield in Edessa and beyond, he reasoned, should he had sought them, would have reinforced Manuel's authority over Edessa and Antioch, but a defeat would have held him responsible for failing to safeguard the Christian lands from Muslim intrusions. However, as it turned out, this point became a moot issue. The Normans of Sicily had renewed their interests in possessing the territories along the southern Byzantine coastlines for the first time since 1081. Manuel was thus forced to withdraw his forces and enter into a premature peace treaty with the Seljuks rather than take his chances by neglecting the more uncertain circumstances involving the Normans in the west of his empire.

On 1 December 1145, the pope issued a bull addressed primarily to the kings and nobility of France in which, in addition to his declaration of the papal leadership of the new crusade, the bull granted the usual holy war indulgences and contained the unique call to defend the lands their fathers had won. The call to defend ancestral lands in effect explicitly extended the papal sanction of the war into other areas where heathens and heretics within Christendom were the principal enemy of the Holy Catholic Church.[7] This sanction ironically reduced much of the support the Holy Land desperately needed from the West because it diverted the attention of potential crusaders to other areas where they could fight heathens, such as in Spain and North Africa, or the Slavs of the north-eastern provinces of the empire. Thus, with this rather troubling and diffuse call to arms, the Second Crusade got underway in Easter 1146 under the banners of King Louis VII of France, and St Bernard, the abbot of Clairvaux. Soon to join them was Emperor Conrad III of Germany. The German army started from Regensburg, and the French from Metz. The Germans marched through Hungary and into Constantinople but, instead of waiting for the French, they crossed the Bosphorus and pushed forward through Asia Minor. In Nicaea, the German army was divided into two. One was placed under the command of Bishop Otto Freising, who later was to become the chronicler of the crusade, and the other under the direct command of the emperor. Otto's forces took the longer

Aegean coast road and suffered disastrous losses at Laodicea and Pamphylia. The bishop and a few of his close comrades were, however, able to escape by sea to Syria. The forces under Conrad did not fare much better. They made their first contact with the Seljuks in Dorylaeum where the Germans took a severe beating and were barely able to make their retreat back to Nicaea. In October 1147, the French army finally reached Constantinople. At Nicaea they joined forces with the remains of Conrad's force and together they marched to Smyrna and then to Ephesus.

In Ephesus, Conrad fell seriously ill and was forced to return to Constantinople. King Louis, the sole remaining commander of the battered armies, enthusiastically pushed forward only to be met in Laodicea with the same fate as the Germans had before him. The army suffered a severe defeat and dispersed to wherever safety could be found. But, as defeated kings and commanders in battle commonly escape to safety, King Louis, his clergy and a handful of his close associates were able to sail away to Antioch. There, Prince Raymond of Antioch, had hoped the king would lead a new expedition against the strongholds of Nur al-Din in Aleppo to ease the prince's concerns over the security of his northern borders. In this manner it was hoped the liberation of Edessa could commence. Certainly this *modus operandi* would thwart the strategic objectives of Nur al-Din — the unification of Muslim forces in all of Syria and eastern Anatolia — and prevent him from becoming the heathen menace of the Latins.

But the king, believing that he was left alone for helping Raymond, abandoned the idea and marched south to rejoin Otto Freising and Conrad, who after a period of rest had travelled to the Holy Land. In June 1148, the leaders of the Second Crusade thus began the reorganization of the remains of their respective armies which had camped in Acre. Astonishingly, the *haute cour* in Jerusalem voted to first attack Damascus instead of Edessa, which had been the original impetus for the present crusade. The siege of Damascus begun in July soon faltered then failed and a decision was made to withdraw. In September, Conrad, dejected and angry, left the Holy Land and was never to return. Louis VII, unable to be of any use, chose however to delay his return to France until the spring of 1149. His joint mission with Emperor Conrad had failed to assuage the misfortunes of Edessa.

Toros II 'The Great' (1145-69)

Unlike his father, Toros survived his incarceration in Constantinople and was able to escape in 1143. He fled to the island of Cyprus — which was then under Byzantine suzerainty — aboard a Venetian vessel and then found his way to Antioch. From there, in the company of a few trusted comrades, he was assisted by a Syrian priest, Mar Athanasius, who led Toros and his men by night to a safe shelter by the river Pyramus. They then crossed the Amanus range and reached the mountainous Armenian strongholds in the Taurus Mountains where Toros

began gathering a new following. He became a friend of Joscelin II of Edessa and his ties with the prince were further strengthened when Toros married the daughter of Simon of Raban, one of Joscelin's vassals. He rallied around him the Armenians in the eastern parts of Cilicia and after a persistent and relentless pursuit of the Greeks, he successfully ousted the Byzantine garrisons from Pardzerpert, Vahka, Sis, Anazarba, Adana, Mamistra and eventually Tarsus.

His victories were aided by the lack of Muslim attacks in Cilicia and from the setbacks the Greeks and the Latins had suffered on the heels of the loss of Edessa. Towards the end of the first half of the 12th century, Cilicia once again found itself largely in the hands of the Roupenians. Emperor Manuel Comnenus, unhappy with Toros's progress in the areas still claimed by the empire, sought peaceful means to settle his conflict with Toros, but his attempts bore him no fruits. As a result, during the course of the next 20 years there were no less than three separate military campaigns launched by the emperor against Toros, but each campaign was only able to produce a limited success. The first of these occurred in 1152 with an army under the command of Manuel's cousin, Andronicus Comnenus (the son of John II), but the campaign failed dismally.

Toros was well prepared for the unsuspecting Greeks and consequently won a decisive victory. In defeat, Andronicus fled to Antioch where he was involved in an illicit love affair, much to the displeasure of the emperor, with Princess Philippa, a sister of Bohemond III of Antioch and of Maria, Manuel's wife.[8] He was dismissed from his office, and with large sums of stolen money he fled to Palestine. Traditionally, Cilician Armenians who opposed Toros supported the Hetumians. They were, generally speaking, pro-Byzantine sympathisers and therefore did not overlook any opportunity for engaging in anti-Roupenian armed conflict. Andronicus's mission was such an opportunity but, unfortunately for the Hetumians, it was not an occasion for glory. Many of their numbers were killed by Toros's aggressive strategy, and many more were taken into captivity, among whom were the two illustrious members, Oshin II of Lampron and his son Hetum of Lampron. Oshin was eventually released for a ransom but his son was kept as hostage. As a measure of Toros's wisdom in *affaires d'état* — and being an Armenian who identified himself with all Armenians despite their differences in political persuasions — he not only arranged the marriage of his daughter to Hetum but also returned half the ransom money to the groom's father Oshin as a gesture of their solidarity in heritage.[9]

At this point the emperor seemed to have favoured a more diplomatic solution to his problems with Toros but not necessarily free of deception. He first persuaded the Seljuk sultan of Iconium, Mas'ud, to attack Toros and demand his submission to the sultan's suzerainty. However, the ensuing Seljuk attack, which in fact was provoked by an Armenian raid into Seljuk lands in Cappadocia in the winter of 1154, was routed successfully by Toros in collaboration with a contingent of the Knights Templar.[10] However, the

coincidental death of the sultan from natural causes brought his son Kilij Arslan II to the leadership. The new sultan was anxious to rally allies against the growing power of Nur al-Din and, wisely, wished to remain at peace with his Christian neighbours, and even approached Toros for an alliance. They quickly established a friendly rapport and in 1158, a peace treaty was concluded.

Disappointed again with his diplomatic initiative to subdue Toros, Manuel turned to Antioch for help. Reynald of Chatillon, who had taken command of Antioch by marrying Raymond's widow, Constance, was promised financial rewards should he choose to help the emperor. However, Reynald's inability to make meaningful progress against Toros angered the emperor and led him to renege his promise whereupon Reynald, being a daredevil adventurer with no political commonsense, quickly sided with Toros and conspired, to the utter dismay and displeasure of the emperor, to attack Cyprus. The raids on Cyprus gave much satisfaction and relief to the rebellious allies. Toros and Reynald both conducted widespread plundering of the island and each returned home laden with booty. It was time for the emperor to strike.

In the summer of 1158, Manuel launched his second assault on Toros. As his predecessor John Comnenus had done before him, Manuel at the head of an army marched down the usual routes leading to Seleucia. There, with a small rapid deployment force of horsemen and Seleucian troops, he launched a surprise attack on Toros who managed to escape through Tarsus and take refuge in the castle of Dajikikar (Muslims' rock). This cyclical win, lose and win again game, which had so characterised Cilician history, was concluded once more with the restoration of much of Cilicia back to Byzantine control. Despite this outcome, Toros still held the mountainous regions in the north. But diplomacy often being the lesser of two evils, Baldwin III, King of Jerusalem (1143-63), the son of Fulk and Melisende, intervened and successfully brokered a peace treaty between Manuel and Toros. As a result, Toros took the oath of loyalty to the emperor and was pardoned for his transgressions both in Cilicia and Cyprus, and still allowed to hold partial possessions in Cilicia. Within a few years of the treaty, Toros's loyalty was tested when he was asked, in keeping with the wishes of the emperor, to help remove Princess Constance of Antioch as a threat to the throne of Jerusalem which had become vacant with the death of Baldwin III. Toros was swift to help and the princess was sent into exile. Toros's treaty with Manuel, however, was to be short-lived. His brother, Baron Stepan (Stephen), ignoring Toros's official pledges to Manuel, with the help of a few of his supporters had continued attacking Greek garrisons thus giving Andronicus Euphorbenus, the Byzantine governor stationed in Tarsus, the opportunity to sabotage the treaty. Stepan was invited to a banquet held in the governor's residence, and in the mind of Stepan this prestigious invitation carried with it the promise of a leadership role for himself. However, upon arrival, he was seized and his mutilated corpse was flung over the gates of Tarsus. Toros's retaliation was

immediate. With his other brother Mleh (Meleh), he took revenge by attacking Byzantine garrisons at random throughout Cilicia and indiscriminately killing Greek soldiers wherever they were encountered. Eventually, a reconciliation with the emperor was again negotiated through the mediation of Jerusalem. Andronicus, was recalled and replaced by Constantine Coloman as the new Byzantine governor in Tarsus.[11]

While Byzantium was content with the relations it maintained with Jerusalem, the situation in Cilicia in 1165 was far from settled. Intermittent fighting erupted everywhere, harassing the Greek forces throughout Cilicia. In 1168, Manuel, obsessed with his dilemma with Toros, marched his armies into Cilicia for the third time under the command of Constantine Coloman.[12] Coloman was able to produce only limited successes which in the end induced Byzantium to renounce its right of possession of the whole of Cilicia so long as it had access to the ports of the Gulf of Alexandretta. Byzantium also disclaimed all rights to direct government of Cilicia and accepted in settlement only Toros's recognition of Byzantine suzerainty. Ultimately, after the death of Manuel in 1180, Byzantium lost Cilicia completely. But long before then Toros II, weary after nearly quarter of a century of rule and warfare, abdicated in favour of his young son Roupen, who was placed under the guardianship of the regent Thomas. Toros died in 1169.

Toros II's accomplishments during his reign had placed the Armenian barony of Cilicia on a firm footing, and had created the opportunity for his successor to build a lasting nation; hence he is called 'The Great.' His work was almost undone by his brother Mleh, the only other surviving son of Baron Levon I, whom, a few years earlier, Toros had expelled from Cilicia for embracing the Muslim faith. Mleh had entertained his own visions of grandeur and seems to have embraced Islam to facilitate his plans with Nur al-Din of Aleppo for assistance. He refused an amicable settlement with regent Thomas regarding the succession to the leadership of Cilicia and invaded Cilicia with a force provided by Nur al-Din.

Fearing for Roupen's life, Thomas entrusted the young child into the care of the patriarch Nerses IV Shnorhali in Hromkla and fled to Antioch. This measure of caution however did not save the life of the young Roupen, who was followed by Mleh's men and murdered. With Toros's legitimate heir dead, Mleh embarked on a policy of conquest with cruel application of force. He beleaguered the Hetumians at Lampron, but in spite of a long siege his attempt to take this stronghold failed. He then turned his attention eastward and conquered the possessions of the Knights Templar in the Amanus mountains and took Adana and Mamistra. He routed at Tarsus the assembled forces of the governor Constantine Coloman, made him a prisoner, and sent him to Nur-al-Din, who held Constantine for heavy ransom.[12]

The usurper Mleh with his political imperatives in focus and with cunning persistence in harassing the Byzantines, finally succeeded in 1173 in securing Manuel's recognition of him as 'Baron of Cilician Armenia' with whom now

all Byzantine affairs in Cilicia were to be conducted. But, as usual, those who live by the sword die by the sword. On 15 May 1174, Nur al-Din died in Damascus, an event which brought an end to Mleh's source of power. Vulnerable and without an ally, members of Mleh's own inner circle of Armenian nobles, tired of his cruelty towards the Armenians and of his Muslim faith, took the initiative and murdered him in Sis in 1175.

Following Mleh's assassination, Baron Roupen II, the eldest son of Stepan and nephew of Toros the Great, took the reins of Cilicia. Since his father's death, Roupen had been living with his maternal uncle Pagouran, lord of the fortress of Baberon, protecting the Cilician Gates pass in the Taurus mountains. Mleh's destructive legacy had left the Greeks apprehensive of the Roupenians and hence maintained an uneasy relationship with Roupen. The new leader of Cilician Armenia was a prince with moderate expectations in view of the overwhelming odds against him represented by the Turks on one hand and the Greeks and Franks on the other. In 1180, he made peace with Kilij Arslan II only to find himself faced with the traditional struggle against his rival Hetumians who had now solicited the assistance of Antioch. In 1183, Hetum of Lampron, allied with Bohemond III, the son of Constance of Antioch, began joint hostilities against Roupen.

They invited Roupen to Antioch as a prelude to ending the counterproductive rivalry between the two Armenian houses, but upon his arrival Roupen was taken captive and imprisoned. His release required payment of a large ransom, and the submission of Adana and Mamistra as vassalages to Antioch. The positive outcome of this charade was that Roupen's brief absence had given his brother Baron Levon II the opportunity to put his sharp political skills to practice as the interim guardian of the Roupenian House. But Levon was also given a golden chance to critically assess the ramifications of the political developments in his neighbouring principality of Antioch. This fortuitist involvement of Levon in the affairs of his brother's realm was to set the stage for the opening of an entirely new chapter in the history of the Armenians in Cilicia. Levon led Cilicia until his brother was ransomed, but Roupen never returned as head of state. He abdicated in favour of his brother Levon and retired to the monastery of Drazark near Sis where he died a year later in 1188. The dawn of the Third Crusade was on the horizon.

Birth of the kingdom – Baron Levon II 'King Levon I' (1199-1219)

Baron Levon II, the son of Stepan and the great-great-grandson of Roupen I, became the first king of the Roupenian House to rule Cilician Armenia. His astute ways of balancing his political ambitions between pope and emperor eventually earned him the supreme position of his land. His political and

military position commanded the attention of the German emperor, Frederick I Barbarossa, who sought Levon's assistance on the eve of the Third Crusade that began in 1189. In return for Levon's full support of the crusade, Frederick agreed to offer Levon a royal crown and proclaim him king. However, Frederick's accidental death left the actual responsibility of investing Levon as a king in the hands of Frederick's son and successor, Emperor Henry VI.

Levon's pre-eminence in the political arena during this period of Cilician history cannot be overestimated as he drew direct attention even from the highest ecclesiastical echelons of the Roman See. A testimony to this are the letters written to Levon by Pope Clement III (1187-91) in which the pope urges Levon to help the crusaders realise their sacred objective. We also have letters subsequently written by Pope Innocent III (1198-1216), successor to Pope Celestine III (1191-98), in connection with his holiness' recognition of Levon as 'King of Armenia' and emphasising that the two, as sovereigns, must strive to foster the wellbeing of the Holy Mother Church (documents 5&6).[13]

These letters collectively illustrate Levon's disproportionate political clout compared to the relatively insignificant size of his mountainous domain. All of these contacts with the Latin West were highly important factors which in years to come dictated the future course of Levon's kingdom. This was a period, during most of the 13th and 14th centuries, when Cilicia was being gradually cultivated and drawn into the realm of Latin influences radiating predominantly, as we shall see, from Latin political centres in Cyprus and Jerusalem. To illustrate this, there is no finer example than the ready willingness of Rome to declare Levon the first monarch of the Armenians in Cilicia- and on the occasion of Baron Levon's coronation:

> Pope Celestinus III, sent Conrad, Archbishop of Moquntia, to Cilicia with a magnificent crown. On the arrival of Conrad he was met by Levon and Gregory the Pontiff of all the Armenians, to whom he proposed for their acceptance three conditions set by the Pope. The first was to celebrate the principal festivals on the day they happen to fall, as is done throughout Christendom. Secondly, that the divine service should be performed publicly in the church, and that the people should never be kept outside the church during the celebration of the Mass. Thirdly, not to break the fast on Easter eve, in order to avoid scandals. Levon promised to agree, but Conrad required that at least twelve bishops should promise on oath to do so. This was done.[14]

With the signing of the Act of Union of 1198, to which Nerses of Lampron and Archbishop John VI of Sis were signatories, the coronation of Levon proceeded without delay. On 6 January 1199, in the Church of Sourp Sophia (Holy Wisdom) at Tarsus, Baron Levon II was consecrated King Levon I jointly by the Armenian patriarch Grigor VI Pahlavuni and Conrad of Wittelsbach, archbishop of Mainz. The ascension of Levon to the throne of Cilician Armenia

Leo Armeniæ Rex, Reuerendiſſimo in Chriſto Patri & Domino, Innocentio, Dei gratia Summo Pont. & vniuerſali Papæ, tanto, ac tali honore Digniſſimo.

De ſuo erga veram Religionem, & Sedem Apoſtolicam amore; & quòd petat auxilium contra Sarracenos.

LEo per eandem, & Romani Imperij gratiam Rex omnium Armeniorum, cum ſalutatione ſeipſum, & quicquid poteſt. Gloria, laus, & honor omnipotenti Deo, qui Vos tantum & talem paſtorem Eccleſiæ ſuæ præeſſe voluit, veſtris bonis meritis exigentibus: & tam fructuoſam, & firmam fabricam ſuper fundamentum Apoſtolorum componere, & tantum lumen, ſuper candelabrum poſitum, toti Orbi terrarum ad ſalutem totius Chriſtianitatis effundere dignatus eſt. In veſtri verò luminis gratia, ſalutaribus monitis Reuerendiſs. Patris noſtri Archiepiſcopi Moguntini, inſtructi & informati, omne Regnum nobis à Deo commiſſum, ampliſſimum, & ſpatioſum, & omnes Armenios, huc illuc in remotis partibus diffuſos, ad vnitatem Sanctæ Romanæ Eccleſiæ, diuina inſpirante clementia, reuocare cupimus, & exoptamus. Ad hæc calamitates, miſerias, paupertates, & imbecillitatem

Թուղթ Լեւոնի Թագաւորին Հայոց առ մեծ քահանայապետն Հռոմայ Իննովկենտիոս Պապն:

Որով ծանուցանէ Պապին զսէրն իւր առ նա և առ առաքելական աթոռն: և խնդրէ ՚ի նմանէ զօգնութիւն ընդդէմ Տաճկաց.

Լեւոն՝ շնորհօքն այ և կայսերն հռոմայեցւոց Թագաւոր ամ հայոց. պատուականն հօրդ և տն մերոյ, Իննովկենտիոս, մեծ և ընդհանուր քահանայապետիդ, և որ ժամանակ պապիդ, զանձն մեր և զկարս մատուցանեմք: փառք, օրհնութի, և պատիւ ամենակալին այ. որ զձեզ զայսպիսի մեծ և սէ հովիւ ընտրեաց վերակացու լինել եկեղեցւոյ իւրում ըստ պահանջման զեղակատար արժանեաց ձերոց: Եւ արժանի համարեցաւ դնել ՚ի վր հիման առաքելոցն զայդպէս պտղաբեր և հաստատահիմն շինուած, և պայծառացուցանել տիեզերաց զջահ արփիական, եդեալ ՚ի վր լուսնկալ աշտանակի առ ՚ի փրկութիւն ամ քրիստոնէից: Ուստի շնորհօք մաքրափայլ պայծառութեան լուսոյդ և մեք ուսեալք և զգուշացեալք ՚ի ձեռն փրկական խրատուց գերապատիւ հօրն մերոյ Մաղնեցիակոպոսի մոգունթացւոյ. կամիմք, և փափականօք յանկանամք ածել օգնականութեամբ այ ՚ի միաբանութիւն մեծի սբ եկեղեցւոյդ հռոմայ զշնորհեալ մեզ յայ լայնանիստ աշխարհատարած Թա

Innocentij iij. ad præcedentem Leonis epist. responsio; qua laudat illius studium erga Sedem Apost. cuius primatum demonstrat; hortatur, vt in obedientia eiusdem S. Sedis fideliter perseueret; & subsidium contra Sarracenos citò se missurum pollicetur.

IS Ecclesiam suam, congregatam ex gentibus, non habentem maculam, neque rugam super gentes & Regna constituit; is extendit palmites eius vsque ad mare, & vsque ad terminos terræ ipsius propagines dilatauit; cuius est terra, & plenitudo eius, Orbis terrarum, & vniuersi qui habitant in eo. ipse etiam Romanam Ecclesiam non solùm vniuersis fidelibus prætulit, sed supra cæteras Ecclesias exaltauit: vt cæteræ ab ea non tam viuendi normam, & morum sumerent disciplinam, sed & fidei etiam catholicæ documenta reciperent, & eius seruarent humiliter instituta. In Petro enim Apostolorum Principe, cui excellentius alijs Dominus ligandi & soluendi contulit potestatem, dicens ad eum: quodcunque ligaueris super terram, erit ligatum & in cælis: & quodcunque solueris super terram, erit solutum & in cælis: Ecclesia Romana, sedes eius, et Sessores ipsius Romani Pontifices, successores Petri, et vicarij IESV Christi, sibi inuicem per successiuas varietates tem-

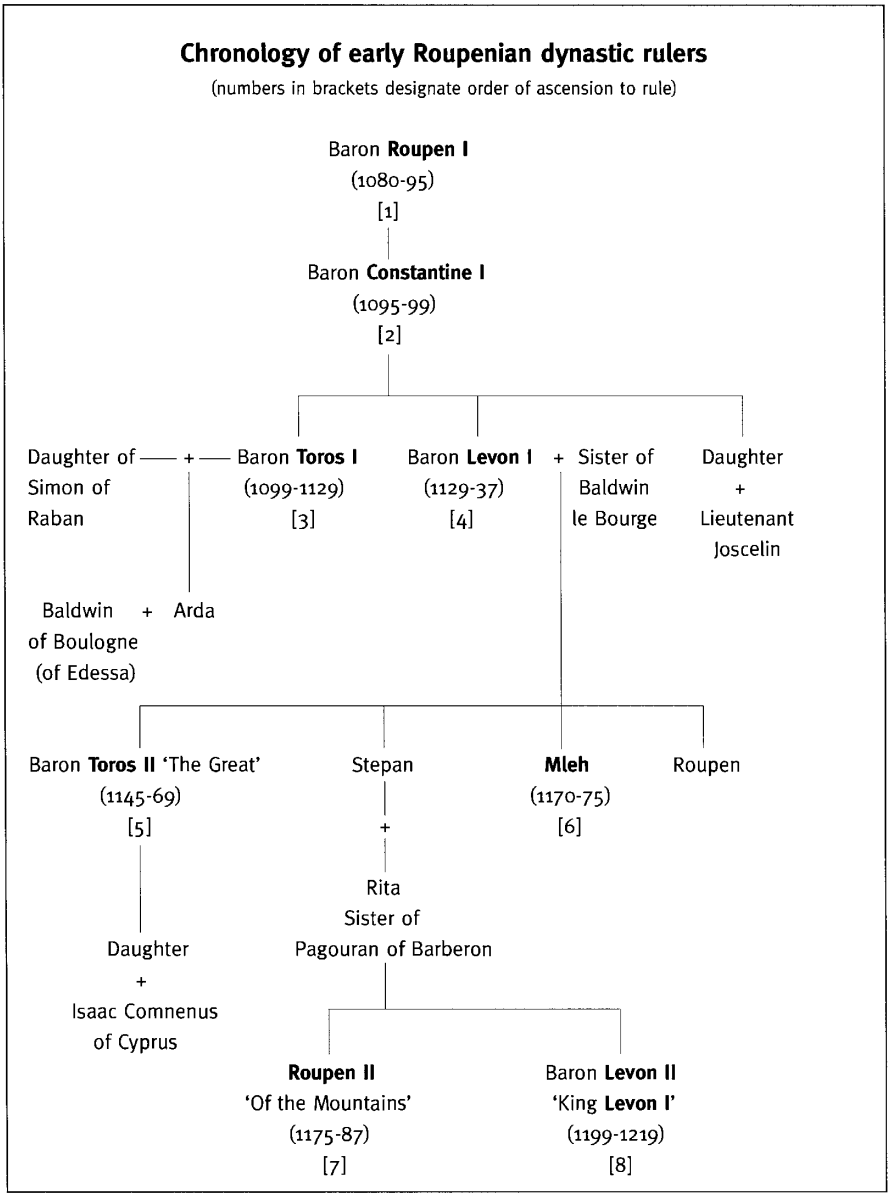
[illegible]

as its first Armenian monarch heralded into reality not merely an official end to Cilicia's shadowy umbilical connection to Byzantium, but also a new era of ecclesiastical co-operation with the West under the watchful eye of the Holy Roman See. The former was a necessary compromise on the part of Rome in exchange for Levon's assistance in the deliverance of the Holy Land, whilst at the same time also a political attempt at bringing the Armenian Church within the Roman sphere of influence. During the two decades of his reign, King Levon succeeded in establishing Cilician Armenia as a powerful and a unified Christian state. He was recognized and praised for his political, military and economic successes and was often referred to as 'Levon the Magnificent.' He died in May 1219 and leaving no male heirs, his daughter Zabel became heiress to his kingdom and was proclaimed queen — the only queen to have reigned in Cilician Armenia and the second after King Tigran III's daughter Erado (20-8 BC) in the whole of Armenian history. Through her marriage to Hetum, the son of Constantine of Lampron, Levon's legacy cemented the two rival Armenian dynasties into one unifying force that launched the long history of Armenian sovereignty in Cilicia (plate 18).

Viewing Levon's reign from another perspective, it was hardly free of the political intrigues and excesses of greed that characterised the feudal societies of the Middle Ages. Cilicia, as the gateway to the interior of Asia, was as strategically relevant to the West as Cyprus had been to Byzantium. The Cilician port of Ayas was a key link in the chain of trade routes that connected the spice trade of India and China with the finished goods and manufacturing industry of Europe. Charters regarding trade and commercial privileges were granted by Levon to the Italian city-states of Genoa, Venice and Pisa, a practise that was to be emulated by Levon's successors well into the 14th century. These charters granted their holders favoured nation status and provided them with special tax exemptions in exchange for their merchandising trade.

They encouraged the establishment of Italian merchant communities in Tarsus, Adana and Mamistra, and became a large source of revenue for the growth and development of Cilician Armenia. Antioch, just south of Ayas along the coastline of the Gulf of Alexandretta, was not far away. The Venetian and Genoese traders and communities there were well established and any intrusion or encroachment on their privileges by outsiders would not have gone unnoticed. This was especially true for any attempt on the part of King Levon to secure new Armenian influences in Antioch.

No doubt, he envisioned annexing the principality of Antioch to his kingdom thus reinforcing his authority along much of the northeastern Mediterranean coastline. He had first put this plan into action in 1194, whilst still baron of Cilicia, by first seizing the strategic fortress of Baghras (Gaston) after Saladin had abandoned it since his victory over Bohemond III of Antioch in 1190. Baghras legally belonged to the Knights Templar who, being disgruntled with Levon's occupation of the fortress, allied themselves with



Bohemond to oppose Levon's grand plan of territorial annexations. Levon lured Bohemond to Baghras with the promise that he would negotiate the surrender of the fortress but, instead, took Bohemond to Sis as prisoner and forced him under duress to cede the principality of Antioch to Cilicia. He then despatched his commander Hetum of Sasoun to occupy the city. This badly planned mission did not succeed but, nonetheless, Bohemond was set

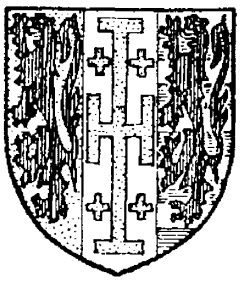
free on the condition that Cilicia will remain free of Antiochene vassalage. Levon's niece, Alice, daughter of Baron Roupen II, was given in marriage to Raymond, the elder son of Bohemond, to seal their agreement.

This marriage kept Levon sufficiently hopeful that one day Antioch would become part of Cilicia through Raymond, his son-in-law once removed. The marriage produced a son named Raymond-Roupen who unexpectedly became heir-apparent in Antioch after his father's early death in 1197. Levon actively pursued the throne of Antioch for his grandnephew but, clearly, not without his own personal ambitions regarding the principality. Levon's hopes dimmed in 1201 with the death of Bohemond III. The anti-Armenian faction in Antioch had produced a rival claimant to take the throne. This was in the person of Bohemond's younger son, Bohemond IV of Tripoli.

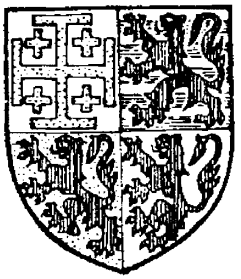
In fact the odds of Levon's success in securing a foothold in Antioch were minimal. The establishment of an Armenian power base there through orchestrated alliances and marriages with the Latins would have given the ruling Cilician Armenian aristocracy valuable opportunities to weaken the hold of the Latin aristocracy in northern Syria. The implications of this were far reaching. With the growth of Armenian power in Antioch there would also come the influence of their commercial interests and the proliferation of the Armenian Orthodox faith. Despite Levon's overtures to Rome regarding church unification, they had not produced any discernable results to satisfy Rome. Although an increased Armenian presence in Antioch would affect the trade interests of the Latin aristocracy, the more serious concern was the long-term survival of the Roman faith in that principality. Unlike Jerusalem, the population of Antioch was composed mostly of Latins, Syrians, Armenians and Greeks who for the most part were still under the suzerainty of the Byzantine Empire.

Any increased Armenian imposition on the stability of the principality's political, commercial and religious fabric would naturally alarm the non-Armenian inhabitants into action. Hence, it was the anti-Armenian faction — the Latin merchants and Greeks, that resisted the growth of Armenian power in Antioch. They had the most to lose. The effort to promote Bohemond IV of Tripoli as the heir to his dead father's throne in Antioch was a natural *'fait accompli'*, but one that cemented decades of hostility between the two rivals. Bohemond IV inherited Antioch and the Armenians were kept out, but only temporarily. In the years that followed, Levon continued to push for his grand-nephew's rights and ultimately succeeded in enlisting the assistance of the Order of the Hospitallers in support of his mission. Jointly they waged repeated assaults against Bohemond and even managed to occupy Antioch for a brief period in 1203. But Levon's greatest triumph was achieved at the beginning of 1216 when at the head of his army he occupied Antioch and installed his grand-nephew at its head. Raymond-Roupen remained in power until Levon's death in 1219.

Chapter 5



Armenia-Lusignan



Armenia-Cyprus

Cyprus: a stepping-stone

The Armenians in Cyprus

The final decade of the 11th century saw the beginnings of the Crusades, which represented, in the main, the great effort made by medieval Europe in going beyond its immediate confines in pursuit of Christian feudal glory and of its distorted visions of heavenly salvation. During the following three centuries, two small Christian kingdoms in the midst of an Islamic sea in the Levant sustained a marginal existence with very little help from Christian Europe. These continued to survive in the face of savage barbarism and monumental religious intolerance. As a result, the inhabitants of these two Christian kingdoms — the kingdoms of Cyprus and Cilician Armenia — created a history that was quite specifically interdependent despite the vast differences that existed in the origins of the peoples involved and in their respective national aspirations. In the normal course of world history it is not uncommon to find peoples of different social heritage and of divergent identities brought together either by force or by choice to coexist co-operatively for a common purpose. Such co-operative unions eventually dissolve with the passage of time at a rate commensurate with the historical developments surrounding their coexistence.

But the emergence of the separate national identities, each with its newly acquired sense of independence, is often accompanied with some form of shared political purpose within the sphere of the acquired freedoms. However, when we examine the histories of Cyprus and Cilician Armenia in the context of the above scenario, it soon becomes apparent that they do not quite fit the general pattern of political expectations. The complementarity of their histories, which so closely fused together from the 12th to the 13th centuries, quickly fell into total disarray during the first half of the 14th century and was culminated with the collapse of the Cilician kingdom two decades later.

In the previous chapters attempt was made to present a general sketch of the plausible origins and demography of a race whose roots can be traced back to ancient Near Eastern civilizations. Discussed to a limited extent were select personalities and historically relevant figures of authority who had helped construct, mould, shape and reshape the national character of this race known

as 'Armenians' and the history of the land of their exile they called Cilician Armenia. The following pages will explore the interdependent histories of Cyprus and Cilician Armenia during the 13th and 14th centuries, and seek insights into the factors that set the stage for the ultimate failure of this unique Armenian experiment.

The island of Cyprus became a province of the Roman Empire in 58 BC and, a few years before the orator Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43) was appointed governor of Cilicia in 52 BC, Cyprus was declared a part of the province of Cilicia. It was not until the reign of Emperor Augustus in 27 BC that Cyprus was separated from Cilicia and became an independent imperial province under a military governor. When the Roman Empire was divided into two parts in the year 364 AD, Cyprus was assigned to the Eastern Empire (Byzantium), which had Constantinople as its capital. Thus, Cyprus became a province directly administered from the diocese of Antioch. The expanding menace of Islam however, after having conquered Damascus, Antioch and Jerusalem, finally reached Cyprus and in 647 the island was fully occupied by the Arabs. It was restored to the empire in 963 by Nicephorus II Phocas and held as a province until the arrival of the Third Crusade.

Two years later in 965, Vahram (Vrakhamia), an Armenian duke, was installed governor of Cyprus. The population of Cyprus in the twilight of the Byzantine Empire was composed mostly of Greeks though there were other racial and religious elements which were long settled in Cyprus or had been brought to the island by conquerors at various times throughout its history. These social elements were represented by Armenians, Jews, Georgians, Maronites (Lebanese Christians), Syrians and Venetian immigrants who had chosen to remain in Cyprus after the First Crusade. With the exception of the Armenians and Jews, the majority of these ethnic mixes were well assimilated. They shared much of the local Greek language, religion and social customs. The Armenians, on the other hand, adhered rigidly to their ethnic separateness, traditional customs and religious identity.

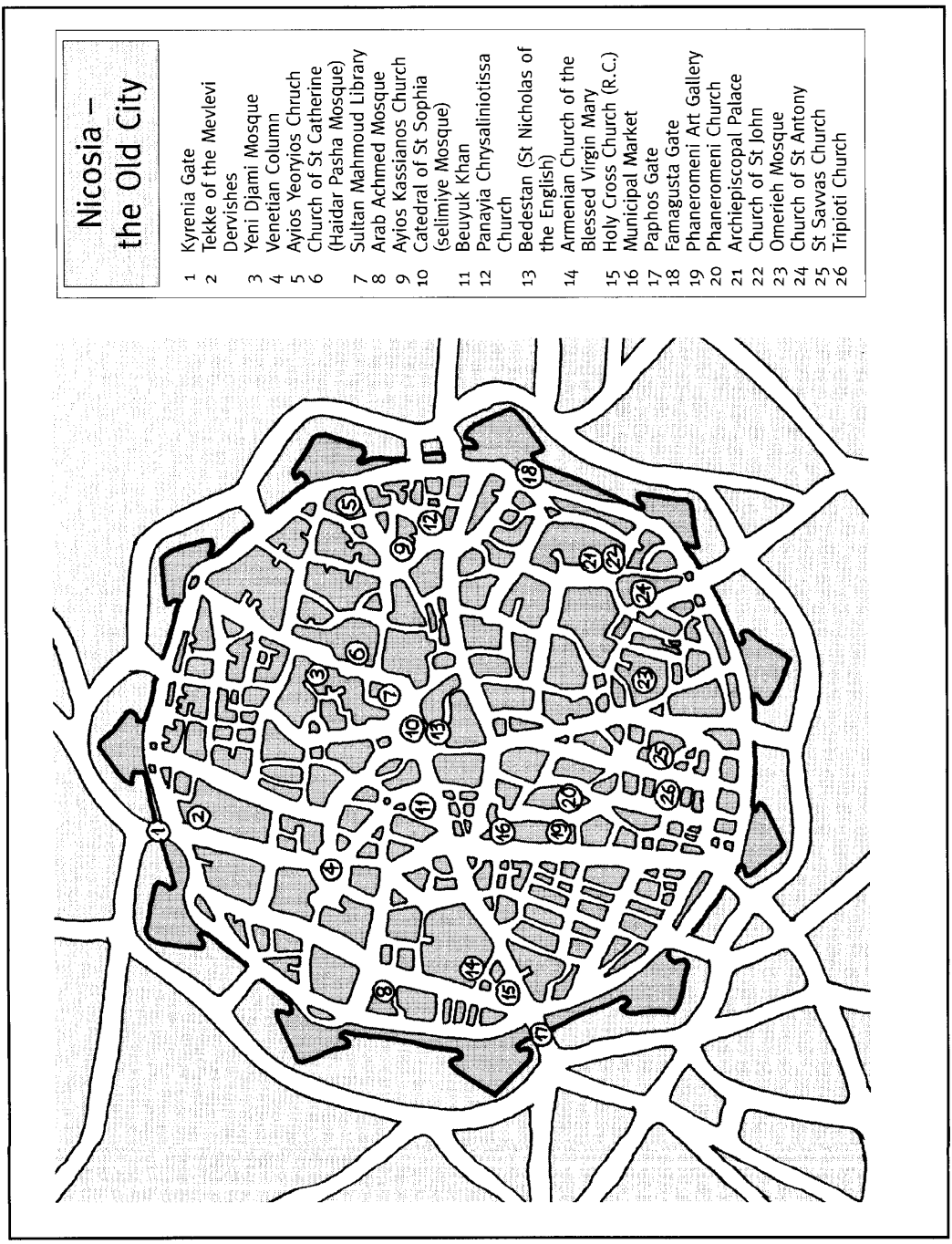
The roots of the Armenians in Cyprus can be traced back to the sixth century AD when Emperor Maurice Tiberius brought back with him to Cyprus in 585 a large contingent of native Armenian captives after his victory over the Persian king Chosroes at the battle of Arzanene in Greater Armenia.[1] Even as late as the mid 14th century, having been twice assaulted by the Mamluks in 1322 and 1337 during the reign of King Levon IV, large numbers of the Armenian population of Cilicia fled to Cyprus and settled there permanently never to return to Cilicia. In essence, the Armenians in Cyprus were at best involuntary immigrants, but nevertheless their influx into Cyprus in far greater numbers steadily increased with the beginnings of Cilician Armenia in the mid 11th century.[2] By the third quarter of the 12th century, strong Armenian communities of traders and artisans were significantly established in Cyprus, and were ecclesiastically large enough to have two episcopal seats (Lefkosa [Nicosia] and Ammochostos [Famagusta]),

and to require the installation of an Armenian archbishop. This was Archbishop Tateos who, in 1179, attended the Armenian Ecclesiastical Synod held at Hromkla under the auspices of Patriarch Grigor IV. There he became a signatory on behalf of the Armenian colonies of Cyprus to the decisions that set forth the Armenian version of the conclusions presented by the Western Christendom's four Ecumenical Synods on matters of Christian faith.

This important role played by Tateos in the delicate pan-Armenian ecumenical enterprise rather convincingly demonstrates that there must have been a large Armenian community in Cyprus during the 12th century. Furthermore, in 1136, the entire population of an area in Cilician Armenia known as Tell Hamdun was transplanted to Cyprus by the island's Byzantine governor John Comnenus, who was desperately attempting to establish southern Anatolia and Cyprus as a unified autonomous territory under his direct rule.[3] Therefore, in view of the above collective historical documentaries, we should not be surprised to find in 1191 the involvement of a large contingent of Armenian soldiers in the army of Isaac Comnenus whose Cypriot forces engaged in battle with the attacking fleet of the English King Richard I Coeur de Lion (the Lionheart) for the conquest of the port of Lemesos (Limassol).[4] In fact the Armenians of Cyprus continued to fight in defence of Cyprus throughout their presence on the island, as for example against the Genoese attack near the port of Larnaca during the reign of King James I of Cyprus (1382-98). Even as late as 1426, we find the Armenian spirit still fighting in support of the Cypriot kings against the intruding Mamluks as demonstrated by the bravery of the priest Constantine, a brother of the Armenian Archbishop Levon of Cyprus.

Isaac, a grandnephew of Emperor Manuel Comnenus, was appointed governor of Cilicia in the last quarter of the 12th century, and as the husband of a daughter of Baron Toros II, he appeared especially suited to improving Byzantine relations with the Armenians. Instead however, Isaac was captured and incarcerated by Baron Roupen II and handed over to Bohemond III of Antioch who did not release him but continued to hold him captive in the hope of a ransom. After the death of Manuel in 1180, Andronicus Comnenus succeeded as emperor of Byzantium and in 1182 at the request of his aunt Queen Theodora he consented to ransom Isaac. Upon his release from captivity, Isaac sailed to Cyprus and, using forged letters and documents as the basis of his authority allegedly granted to him by the emperor, falsely and swiftly proclaimed himself the governor of the island. Cyprus at this juncture of its colourful and vacillating history was at a crossroad: poverty and decay were rampant as a result of decades of neglect by the progressively declining fortunes of the empire. Isaac became a despot and ruled with cruelty.

On several occasions in this text reference has been made to the tenacity with which the Armenians throughout history have clung to their Christian faith. Their identity as a cultural group, or even that of the individual Armenian, is inseparably synonymous with the Armenian Church and, despite



Nicosia, the Old City

the monumental adversities they have endured through the ages, the Armenians have remained true to their Christian creed and, as a race, have never apostatized whether under the oppressive dominance of the Romans, Persians, Greeks, Arabs or Turks.

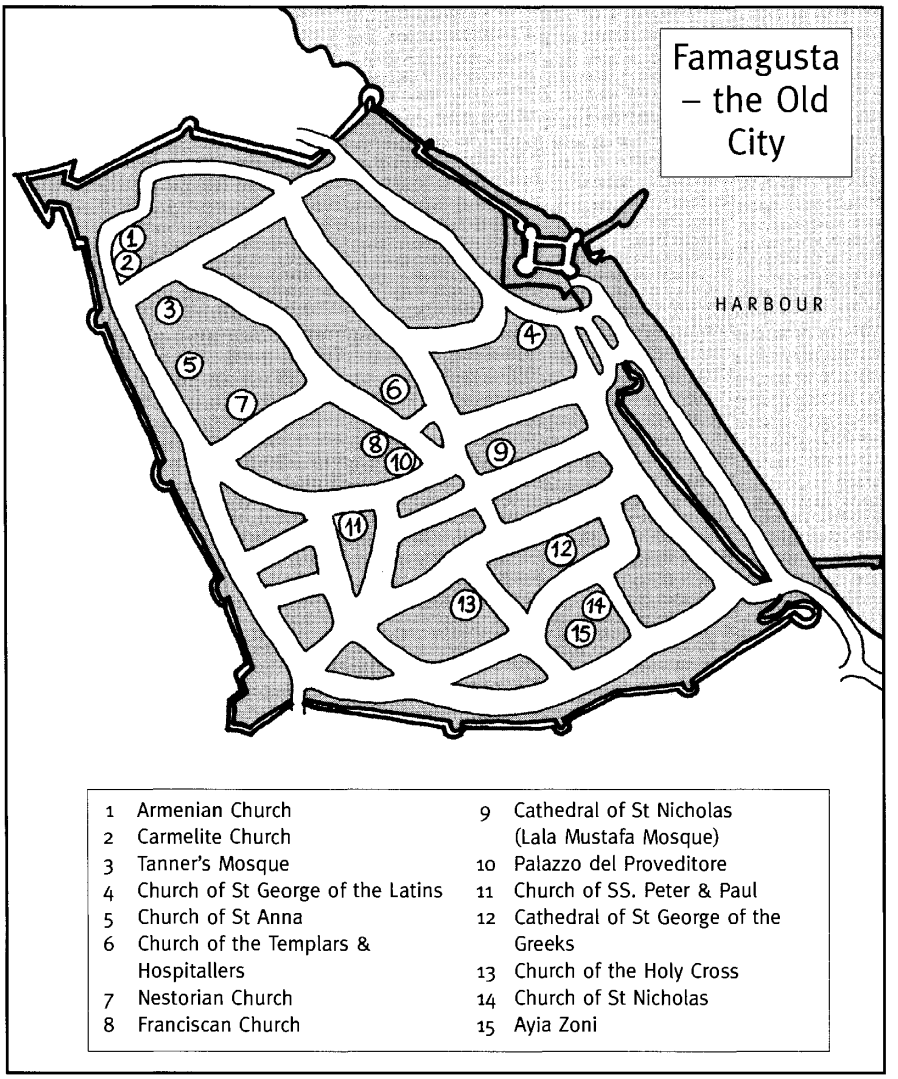
It is not surprising therefore to find that the social milieu of the Armenian communities around the world is centred first and foremost around the Church. This was also true of the pattern of Armenian settlements established in Cyprus where the Armenians gainfully conducted their businesses as merchants, traders, farmers and artisans, especially in the cities of Pafos (Paphos), Limassol, Nicosia, Famagusta and on the slopes of the Kyrenia Mountains. The following descriptions are testimonies to such Armenian communities in Cyprus and provide examples of the role they played in the construction of the fabric of Cypriot society during the Middle Ages.

1. Armenochori — Limassol

The memory of an early Armenian settlement is preserved in the name of this village located north-east of Limassol (plates19&20). The name means 'Armenian village' and at one time during the turbulent history of Cyprus, the village land was the property of the Order of Knights Templar as part of their feudal holdings on the island. In 1307 the village was acquired by the Hospitallers. Other important Armenian settlements — mostly along the northern and southern coastlines — were the villages of Spatharico, Kornokipos, Platani, Episcopi, Mehitar, and Lapayis. There was an Armenian church in Kornokipos called 'St Archangelos' whilst a smaller one in Bellapais was located near the Premonstratensian monastery of S. Maria de Episcopia where Hayton the Chronicler was a canon regular in 1306.

2. Sourp Asdvadzadzin [Blessed Virgin Mary] — Nicosia

There were several Armenian churches in Nicosia of which the more important ones were the church of St George, church of the Holy Cross and Sts Peter and Paul. The major Armenian church in Nicosia however was the Benedictine abbey of Our Lady of Tyre — Notre Dame de Tyr — which was a convent in the time of the Lusignans (plates 21-23). It was built by Baldwin de Buillon in the early 12th century (circa 1106). The design of the church offers a single nave, a large west-facing bay and a polygonal choir with a large window of eight panels forming the entire width of the east-facing bay. After the loss of Jerusalem in 1187 this edifice was used to house the religious and military offices of the collapsed Latin principalities but subsequently became a convent for the Carthusian Order of the Nuns. It was reconstructed extensively by Amaury de Lusignan and later repaired by his brother Henry II in 1310. Whilst a convent, its abbess in 1308 was the Armenian Princess Fimi, the daughter of King Hetum I of Cilicia. The church contains many Lusignan tombstones set into the floor. The tombstone of the Benedictine abbess, Eschiva de Dampierre (d. 1340) can be found at the east end of the vaulted cloister of



Gothic design on the north side of the church. The Armenians took full possession of the church after the Turkish conquest of Cyprus in 1570 but the records seem to indicate that it may have belonged to the Armenians as early as 1460. The Turks used the church initially for salt storage but later decided to return it to the Armenians in recognition of their services to the Turkish efforts during the seven-week siege of the city. The historic Turkish document ordering the return of the church to the Armenians reads as follows:

> When the high Royal Edict arrives, be it known that some of the Armenians of the Nicosia Castle, who have been delivered by our mercy,

> came and requested that their church, which is known as 'Tartouza' and which is situated within this castle and in which now is stored the government salt, be handed to them as soon as the salt is carried out from the building, to become again their church. For this reason, I order that you examine whether it is true that this nation has been delivered by asking our mercy, and whether this church was really theirs before, and if it is not situated near any mosque, that it be handed to them to become their church soon after the salt is taken out of the building, wherein they shall continue their vain religion.[5]

The part of the old city of Nicosia in the vicinity of this church, bounded by Konak Square and Paphos Gate, was known as 'Armenia' until the partition of Cyprus in 1973 (see Map of Nicosia, locations 16 and 20).

3. Monastery of Sourp Asdvadzadzin — Famagusta

This small monastery situated within the city walls of Famagusta was known as the church of the Blessed Virgin Mary and often referred to as *ganchvor* (the church of the Annunciation). Its construction dates back to the 14th century (circa 1346) and was used for housing the Armenian refugees fleeing Cilicia especially during the rise of the Ottoman Empire. The structure of this simple monastery is a single square nave with a traditional apse. The vaulted roof has a central keystone carved in the shape of a rose. A few of the monastery's interesting features include the decorative vases placed in the interior walls. It also appears to have contained relatively extensive wall-paintings depicting symbolic representations of the *Agnus Dei* (Lamb of God).

Also, the exterior of the monastery is impressively adorned with inscriptions exclusively in Armenian script reminiscent of the Armenian churches in eastern Anatolia. In its heyday the Paschal Lamb, symbolic of the sacrificial Christ, was traditionally roasted within the church and the bishop was invited to consume the first morsel (see Map of Famagusta, location 1). A number of small Armenian churches are known to have existed in Famagusta as early as 1287 of which St Sarkis and St Varvara appear to have been the best examples.

4. Monastery of Sourp Magar — Kythrea

Stephen Lusignan, a historian of the 16th century tells us that in 1572 'they (the Copts) had also a convent close to the village of Platani on the northern mountains, which was called St Makarios (St Macharias) and it belonged to the Armenians.' This monastery is tucked away in the slopes of the Kyrenia Mountains and was named after St Makarios of Alexandria (309-404). The present, rather unremarkable structure was erected in 1811. The original edifice now mostly in ruins nearby was founded late in the tenth century and occupied by a Coptic community of Egyptian monks. Remnants of medieval structures are still evident in the east wall of the enclosure protecting the current monastery. The ancient monastery came into the possession of the Armenians

in 1425 and was used primarily by pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem and by visitors from Nicosia and its surrounding areas. The records of an Armenian priest indicate that his brother, Vanes, was killed in this monastery in 1512, suggesting Armenian occupation of the monastery for a significant length of time. During the Ottoman atrocities of 1895-1897 perpetrated against the Armenians, Sourp Magar was used for housing the Armenian orphans brought to the island from Turkey.

Latin Cyprus

Cyprus had clearly played an important role in the disputes and political intrigues played out between the Byzantine emperors and the barons of their eastern provinces. It held a great strategic significance for the First and Second Crusades, as it fundamentally did again for the armies of the Third Crusade. Throughout history, this island state had served as a trade and military supply bastion, as a port of call for pious pilgrims on their way to the Holy Land and, not least, as a Western refuge and safe haven for the dispossessed barons of the crusader principalities. With the passage of time, through the processes of intermarriage and acquisition of property, the great Frankish families of Palestine successfully developed and secured their economic and political hold on Cyprus at the expense of the teetering Byzantine Empire.

But with respect to the history of Cilician Armenia, the process of 'the latinization' of Cyprus really began with Guy de Lusignan. Guy had bought the lordship of Cyprus in 1192 from the Order of the Knights Templar, who in turn had purchased it from King Richard I of England but had failed at their attempt to run the island. They seemed not to have had either the financial resources or the military manpower to administer the island effectively. Guy's acquisition of Cyprus was a compromise settlement with King Richard for the loss of Guy's kingdom of Jerusalem to Saladin. Throughout his wars with Saladin in Palestine, which had continued until the fall of Acre in 1189, Guy had distinguished himself in the cause of the Frankish principalities and had gained the admiration of Jerusalem's King Baldwin IV, whose daughter Sybille had married Guy in 1180. When Baldwin's successor, the child-king Baldwin V, died in 1186, Guy, as heir by marriage, seized the throne and became the king of Jerusalem, a title he held until Saladin's victory in 1187, and, after the fall of Acre to Saladin's army two years later, Guy retreated to Tyre, the only remaining Christian enclave in Palestine. Although Saladin had laid siege to Tyre and planned to storm its battlements, Conrad of Montferrat, the third son of William of Montferrat, had saved the city for the Latins. He entered the city's harbour with his Italian galley, bringing to the besieged city much needed supplies and a small reinforcement of soldiers. This delayed Saladin's final assault on Tyre until the last day of 1187. The assault failed, and on the following day, 1 January 1188, Saladin dispersed his army and withdrew from Tyre.

It was through the acquisition of Cyprus that Guy and his Lusignan successors brought their rigid feudal system into a community which up to that point had not experienced such a form of social administration. However, the newly imported feudalism of the Lusignans appeared to be implemented clearly for the benefit of this Latin nobility's extravagant and luxurious lifestyle.

The Third Crusade (1189-92)

In 1187, King Richard I heard the news of the fall of Jerusalem to Saladin and vowed in Tours, France, to take the cross. In the meantime, the alarming success of Saladin's campaigns in the Holy Land had led the great European powers England, France and Germany to reconcile their political differences and come to the conclusion that another military intervention in Palestine was necessary. Acre, on the northern shoreline of eastern Mediterranean, was chosen to be the first military strategic objective whereupon major inroads towards the recovery of Jerusalem were hoped to follow. In 1189, the forces of the German army under the command of Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa were the first to mobilise. They proceeded by land towards Anatolia, by way of Constantinople, and then into the Christian territories of Cilician Armenia. On 10 June 1190, after crossing the Taurus Mountains, Frederick accidentally drowned in the river Saleph (Calycadnus, or modern Göksu) as his forces were approaching the sea near Silifke. This accident badly affected the morale of the German troops. Some returned home whilst significant numbers set sail for Tyre. The remainder of the force continued on foot across Cilicia and inched its way towards Antioch and then to Tyre.

Unlike the German force, the armies of Kings Philip II (Philip Augustus) of France and Richard of England proceeded to the Holy Land by sea. The French fleet was able to sail without incident. The English fleet, on the other hand, was scattered by a violent storm which forced the fleet to take shelter off the coasts of Crete and Rhodes. Nearer to Cyprus, three English ships were wrecked in the coastal waters and their survivors were captured by its governor Isaac Comnenus and taken hostage. A fourth ship with Richard's sister Princess Joanna, Queen Dowager of Sicily, and Richard's betrothed, Berengaria of Navarre, on board was driven by the strong winds into the bay of Limassol.

Isaac was a shrewd political opportunist and much concerned with his own predicament. He was only too aware of Saladin's conquests in Palestine and feared the waves of Western crusades which would certainly come sweeping across Cyprus on their way to Jerusalem. His standing in Constantinople was suspect at best, thus could not trust the intentions of the crusaders. Consequently, he hastily allied himself with Saladin by making peace, and secured for himself Saladin's protection in the unlikely event the crusaders' fleets launched attacks against Cyprus. However, with the unexpected turn of

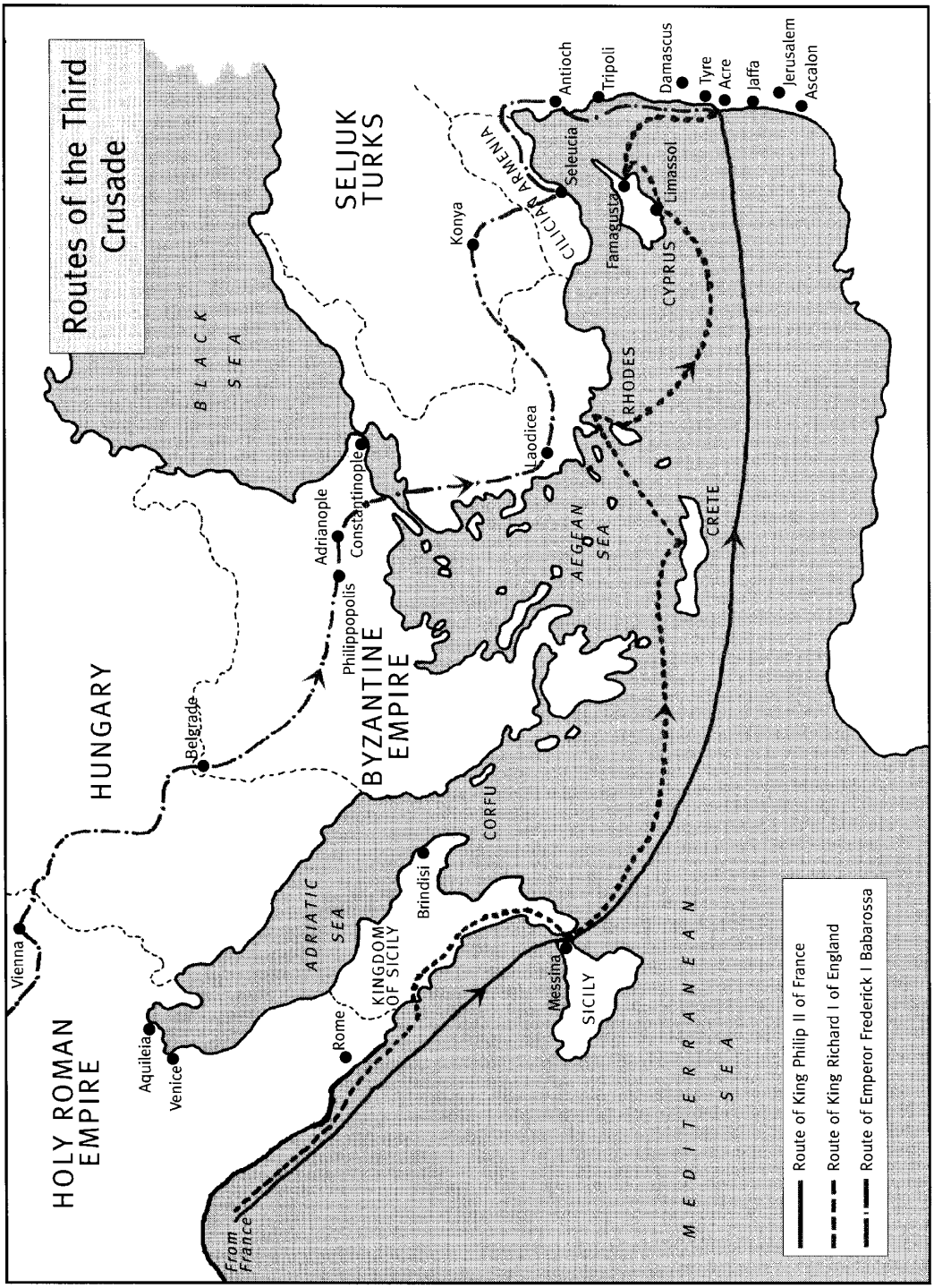
events in the coastal waters of the bay of Limassol, the forces of providence had placed Isaac in a difficult position. He refused to co-operate with King Richard's request to collect the stranded members of his entourage, and denied him permission to land peacefully. In response, the angry king in a boldly executed move commenced hostilities against Isaac and soon captured Limassol and had the despot of Cyprus swear fealty to him. Meanwhile, the dispossessed King of Jerusalem, Guy de Lusignan, being aware of Richard's circumstances, seized his chance in the hope that he might still be able to recover his lost kingdom. He set sail from Tyre to aid King Richard's forces.

Unwittingly too, he had prevented Saladin, however unlikely, from sending help to Isaac, who, in a opportune moment, had fled north towards Famagusta. In pursuit of Isaac, the king boarded his galley and sailed around to the north of the island, whilst Guy led his mounted knights along the coast road. Isaac realised that he could not hold against the attacks coming simultaneously from the south (Guy's) and the east (Richard's), so he switched his tactics and took a final defensive position in Nicosia. He sent his Armenian wife and his daughter to the castle of Kyrenia in the north hoping that they might escape and take refuge in Cilician Armenia. Richard's forces approached Nicosia and resoundingly defeated Isaac near the village of Tremithus in May 1191.

The king entered Nicosia without meeting opposition, but Isaac escaped once again, this time to the castle of Kantara. As so often in his life, Richard fell ill, which forced him to ask Guy to take command of his army and complete the campaign against Isaac. Guy, acting with great determination, besieged the castle of Kyrenia, where he took Isaac's wife and daughter hostage. Fearing for the lives of his wife and daughter, Isaac surrendered in Kantara; he was taken to northern Syria where he was imprisoned in the Hospitallers' castle at Marqab until his death in 1194.

The memory of Isaac Comnenus swiftly receded. His cruelty and tyrannical rule of the people of Cyprus had offended church and emperor, alike. The Cypriot hermit Neophytus (plate 24), driven to outspoken criticism of Isaac, condemned the cruel tyrant and King Richard too as follows:

> For Jerusalem, having fallen under the rule of the godless Saladin, and Cyprus under that of Isaac Comnenus, fights thenceforth, and wars, tumult and turbulence, plunder and dread events, covered the land in which these men ruled, worse than cloud and mist. For lo! the life-giving Sepulchre of our Lord and the other holy places, for our sins have been given to the Mussulman dogs, and at this great calamity every God-loving soul weeps . . . Isaac came to Cyprus, took it, and was proclaimed king. He ruled over it for seven years, and not only utterly despoiled the land, and perpetually harassed the lives of its rich men, but every day he hounded and oppressed its nobles, so that all lived in distress, and sought how by any means they might protect themselves against him . . . While


Routes of the Third Crusade
HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE
HUNGARY
BYZANTINE EMPIRE
SELJUK TURKS
BLACK SEA
ADRIATIC SEA
AEGEAN SEA
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
KINGDOM OF SICILY
CORFU
CRETE
RHODES
CYPRUS
SICILY
CILICIA
LESSER ARMENIA
Vienna
Aquileia
Venice
Rome
Belgrade
Brindisi
Messina
Philippopolis
Adrianople
Constantinople
Konya
Laodicea
Seleucia
Famagusta
Limassol
Antioch
Tripoli
Damascus
Tyre
Acre
Jaffa
Jerusalem
Ascalon
From France
Route of King Philip II of France
Route of King Richard I of England
Route of Emperor Frederick I Babarossa

> things were so, lo, the Englishman lands in Cyprus, and forthwith all ran unto him! Then the king, abandoned by his people, gave himself also unto the hands of the English. Him the English king bound in irons, and having seized his vast treasures, and grievously wasted the land, sailed away to Jerusalem, leaving behind him ships to strip the country and to follow him.[6]

Richard's success in Cyprus was not to detract him very long from his primary mission. His sole objective was to regain the Holy Land from Saladin, and so, within a month of entering Nicosia, the king sold his interests in Cyprus to the Order of the Knights Templar in exchange for an initial down payment on the agreed purchase price and sailed for Acre. His fleet arrived off the coast of Palestine on 7 June 1191, and on 12 July the Muslim commanders in Acre accepted Richard's terms for the surrender of the city. But now, Richard realised that his forces were neither large nor powerful enough to dislodge Saladin from Jerusalem. His most expedient option was therefore to make peace with Saladin, which he did. According to the treaty of Ramla, Saladin agreed that the existing Latin possessions along the eastern Mediterranean coastline from Tyre to Jaffa, would remain in Christian hands and secure from any future threats from Saladin with unrestricted access for all Christians to the holy sites in Jerusalem.

The Templars' rule of Cyprus had proved difficult and the Order had neither the resources nor sufficient manpower to control the island. The ensuing widespread unrest and insurrections against them convinced the Order's Grand Master Robert de Sable to return the island to King Richard in exchange for a compensatory sum equivalent to their initial investment. This fortuitous development received the king's earnest consideration. He had contemplated installing his nephew, Henry of Champagne, as sovereign over the city of Tyre, where Guy de Lusignan now hoped to return as king. However, pressured by the barons of the Latin nobility there, he succumbed finally to their wishes and consented to Conrad of Montferrat becoming king of Tyre. But Richard was still to have his way. Shortly after Conrad was proclaimed king, he was swiftly assassinated under suspicious circumstances and the throne of Tyre was vacant once more.

With no time to lose, Richard arranged the marriage of his nephew to the widow of Conrad; thus Henry of Champagne inherited the throne of Tyre through his newly acquired wife and became king of Tyre. With these events well in hand and his wishes fulfilled, Richard turned his exploitative regal mind to yet another successful political manoeuvre. To end his negotiations with the Templars on the issue of Cyprus, he took advantage of his strong bargaining position and offered the island to Guy de Lusignan as partial reward for Guy's support of him during his campaign in Cyprus against Isaac Comnenus, and also as reasonable compensation for the sovereignty title that Guy had lost in Palestine. In the end, Guy was coerced into agreeing to buy Cyprus from the Templars at the same price as the down payment the

Templars had given to Richard. The conclusion of this grand purchase in May 1192 marked the beginning of the Latin reign in Cyprus, which was to continue for three centuries.

> Now I shall tell you what King Guy did when he had taken seisin of the island of Cyprus. He sent messengers to Armenia, to Antioch, to Acre and through all the land saying that he would give generously to all those who wished to come and dwell in Cyprus so that they might live.

Guy was the son of Hugh VIII de Lusignan, 'the Brown', one of King Richard's trusted liegemen. In 1154, the Lusignans became vassals of the kings of England and in this context any loyalty shown to the kings by the Lusignans might partly explain the co-operative spirit demonstrated by Guy when he set sail from Tyre to help King Richard defeat Isaac Comnenus. This form of reciprocal support was exercised throughout the Third Crusade and was a significant factor in the eventual founding of the kingdom of Cyprus. Guy de Lusignan died in 1194.

The Lusignans of Cyprus (1194-1284)

Amaury (1194-1205)

The political fortunes of the island of Cyprus after the death of Guy de Lusignan rested in the hands of his brother Amaury, who became Guy's successor as lord of Cyprus. It is now necessary to delve into the colourful history of Cyprus during this period, albeit in a cursory manner, in an attempt to reconstruct the backdrop of the political intrigues and scenarios indulged in by its nobility that helped draw the kingdom of Cilician Armenia into the orbit of the Cypriot Franks.

Prior to his death, Guy had named his elder brother Geoffrey de Lusignan, Count of Jaffa, to succeed after him in Cyprus. The Lusignan brothers, from eldest to youngest, were Hugh IX, Geoffrey, Amaury, Guy, Raoul, Pierre and finally Guillaume, who married one of the daughters of Joscelin III, Count of Edessa. Geoffrey had little interest in the chance to take over the rule of Cyprus, and instead he renounced this and all his other possessions in Jaffa and returned to France. In keeping with feudal custom, next in order of succession was Amaury, who had been appointed by Guy shortly before his death as constable of Cyprus. Thus, Amaury was elected by the nobles of Cyprus as the new lord of Cyprus.[7] Within only three years of his election (1194-97), Amaury succeeded in the creation of two fundamental milestones in the history of his island state that were soon to become a model for Baron Levon I's own personal quest for political power in his native land of Cilician Armenia. Amaury's first achievement was the replacement of the island's Greek Orthodox patriarchate with an omnipotent Roman Catholic archbishopric, which he felt was necessary to pave the way for the fulfilment

of his ultimate ambition. That ambition was his desire to have Cyprus declared a kingdom with himself enthroned as its first king, endorsed and anointed by the pope in Rome. Thus, the election of the first Roman archbishop was entrusted to the Latin Church in Nicosia under the pretence that it was Amaury's wish to bring the schismatic Greek Orthodox Church into the fold of the Roman Holy See.

Amaury's pursuit of his vision of establishing his kingdom in Cyprus was vigorous. He sought the support of the German Emperor Henry VI of Hohenstaufen in securing a crown for Cyprus. By 1197, Henry was planning a crusade to the East and was firmly intent forcing Byzantium into bending to the authority of the Roman Church. Hence the importance of Cyprus as a kingdom under the jurisdiction of the Holy Roman Empire did not escape Henry's attention nor that of Amaury's. In the lord of Cyprus, Henry had found an ally who was forging ahead with ecclesiastical and secular reforms in Cyprus which were undoubtedly seen by the Greeks as hostile to Constantinople.

For Amaury, on the other hand, the possession of a crown and the elevation of his island to the status of a kingdom under the imperial umbrella would not only provide the protection of the emperor but also ensures that Cyprus would be ruled by his descendants. Henry wasted no time in agreeing to Amaury's request, hence he sent the archbishops of Trani and Brindisi to Cyprus bearing the royal sceptre and regalia for Amaury's coronation. The emperor himself was to follow the archbishops in order to personally attend the ceremonies but an illness prevented his departure, and so he entrusted the enthroning authority to the hands of the imperial chancellor Conrad, the bishop of Hildesheim. The chancellor, accompanied by Count Adolf of Holstein, upon arrival in Cyprus was personally received by Amaury who then escorted the legate to Nicosia for his coronation in September 1197 in the cathedral of St Sophia[8] (Selimiye mosque since 1954, plates 25&26).

Amaury's reign in Cyprus saw several events take place that served as catalysts for the establishment of a congenial relationship between himself and Baron Levon II of Cilicia. A Cypriot Greek rebel named Cannaqui,[9] learning that he was to be arrested, had taken refuge in the coastal areas of Antioch. From his hideout he launched raids on the coastal settlements of Cyprus and raised considerable concern in the residents of the eastern shores of the island. In one of these raids Cannaqui by chance captured Amaury's wife from his first marriage, Eschiva d'Ibelin, who was convalescing in Paradisi with her children. The captured queen and her children were taken to Antioch as hostages. Baron Levon, a friend of the queen's father, Baldwin d'Ibelin, demanded of Cannaqui that the queen and her children be delivered to him for their safe return to Cyprus. Upon receiving the royal family unharmed, Levon removed them to the fortress of Korikos where they were reunited with Amaury. In 1210, Levon, now King Levon I, married Amaury's sister Sybille.

In another incident, Henry of Champagne, king of Tyre and nephew of Richard the Lionheart, had travelled to Sis in Cilicia in his attempt to reconcile the dispute between Baron Levon and Bohemond III of Antioch over sovereignty rights in Antioch. Bohemond had been apprehended and detained in Sis by Levon but the mediation of Henry produced Bohemond's release without incident. However, on the return journey to Tyre, Henry was persuaded to interrupt his journey in Cyprus for an attempt at yet another peace-making mission, this time with his own rival Amaury de Lusignan. Their years of dispute had centred over claims to the city of Jaffa and the office of constable of Jerusalem, both of which Amaury maintained were his rightfully as the legacy of his deceased brother Guy de Lusignan. Peace was achieved but only through the unexpected mediation on the part of Levon, an act which gained him favour both in Amaury's court as well as in Henry's.

On the issue of Levon's incarceration of Bohemond III, the following details seem to provide some insight into their dispute. In 1194 Bohemond had been invited to Sis as a prelude to discussions for a potential resolution of the dispute. Instead, he was apprehended and detained and, under duress, forced to renounce his sovereignty over Antioch before his release was effected through the goodwill mediation of Henry of Champagne. Although Levon did not succeed in obtaining Antioch from Bohemond, Henry's intercession on behalf of Bohemond on the other hand had produced a compromise whereby Bohemond and his younger son Bohemond IV of Tripoli (heir-presumptive in Antioch) would renounce their feudal authority over Cilicia.

This compromise was acceptable to Levon only because it also required the marriage of Bohemonds elder son Raymond (heir-apparent) to Levon's niece Alice. The independence of Cilicia from vassalage both to Tripoli and Antioch was what Levon had hoped to achieve because it paved the way for him to seek his own crown, at least as king of Cilicia, much in keeping with Amaury's approach in Cyprus. Levon believed it was essential for his crown to receive the endorsement of the Holy Roman Empire because only then he would have true authority independent of Byzantine control in his dealings with the West. As described in the previous chapter, this apparent reconciliation with Bohemond III over the issue of Antioch was sealed by the marriage of Raymond to Levon's niece Alice. Through this marriage Levon, whilst remaining king of Cilicia, had envisioned, nonetheless, bringing Antioch under his sphere of influence. However, Raymond died shortly after his son was born, who was given the name Raymond-Roupen, and with his death Levon's plans for Antioch seemed unlikely. However, upon the death of the child's grandfather Bohemond III in 1201, Levon, now a king crowned by the empire, saw his opportunity to renew his pursuit of Antioch on behalf of his grandnephew as the rightful heir in that principality. His position was justified; neither Bohemond III nor his son Raymond were alive and Bohemond IV had his crown in Tripoli. Pope Innocent III was favourably

inclined to support Levon's position but demanded in exchange the absorption of the Armenian Church into the orbit of the Roman See which Levon had promised to help bring about as a condition of his coronation. Paradoxically, any hope that that condition might be fulfilled disintegrated shortly after Baron Levon II's coronation as King Levon I in 1199.[10]

Henry of Champagne died on 10 September 1197. The *haute cour* offered the crown to Amaury de Lusignan upon his marriage to the widowed Isabel. He was crowned king of Jerusalem in October 1198. The union received the approval of Pope Innocent III (1198-1216), who had succeeded Pope Celestine III (1191-98) on 8 January of the same year. The new pope was avidly entertaining opportunities wherever possible to reach a reconciliation with the Armenians for their acceptance of the ecclesiastical authority of Rome. The proximity of Cyprus to Cilicia and the cross-fertilization of their political and domestic affairs were viewed by the pope as helpful to his search for reconciliation. He thus re-endorsed Rome's approval of Amaury's enthronement as king of Cyprus and Jerusalem. Cyprus was once again drawn into the centre of the eastern Mediterranean Christendom which was now so vitally important to the continued survival of the remnants of the West's once glorious presence.

Amaury's reign gave Cyprus a much-needed period of consolidation both in economic and political terms, and had allowed the island to achieve a relative degree of stability. Amaury died in Acre on 1 April 1205 and, on the death of Isabel soon afterwards, the throne of Jerusalem was vested in her eldest daughter Maria, the child from her previous marriage to Conrad of Montferrat. The throne of Cyprus passed to Hugh, the only surviving son of Amaury from his first wife Eschiva d'Ibelin. The concerted efforts of the two Lusignan brothers Guy and Amaury, who had begun their rule of Cyprus soon after the conclusion of the Third Crusade had succeeded in establishing a Frankish kingdom in Cyprus whose influence extended into Cilicia and along the entire coastline of the eastern Mediterranean.

Hugh I (1210-18)

Hugh was ten years old when his father died. Walter de Montbeliard, husband of Hugh's elder sister Burgundia, was appointed regent and guardian. Although the *haute cour* had begrudgingly consented to this double assignment of Walter as regent and guardian, its decision nonetheless had constituted a breach of feudal law which restricts an appointee of the court to either regency or guardianship of a prince who is first in line for succession. Walter, as had been feared, exploited his strong position by arranging a number of marriages which increased his political influence. He arranged the marriage of his wife's sister Helvis de Lusignan (Prince Hugh's half-sister) to Odo of Dampierre, but the marriage was short lived. In 1208, Hugh came of marriageable age and arrangements were accordingly made by Walter for his nephew's marriage to his

step-sister Alice of Champagne, daughter of Henry of Champagne. When Hugh reached the age of majority in 1210 Walter resigned his position as regent and sailed for Acre to be with his other nephew John d'Brienne. It was on 3 October of the same year that John had married Isabel's daughter Maria, heiress to the crown of Jerusalem. Two years later Maria died, leaving her husband John as regent to their daughter Isabel, the future queen Isabel II. In 1214, John married the Armenian princess Stephanie, daughter of King Levon I by his first wife Isabel of Antioch.[11]

After Walter's departure from Cyprus, Hugh set out on a course that seemed intent on disassembling most of his deposed regent's earlier political initiatives. With the help of the Hospitallers, Hugh supported King Levon's ongoing conflict with Bohemond IV over the succession rights in Antioch, a conflict which in the end provoked Pope Innocent III into excommunicating Levon in 1211. The papal instructions were sent from Rome to the patriarchs of Antioch and Jerusalem to publish the ecclesiastical ban of Levon.[12] The pope's displeasure with Levon was also expressed by requiring John d'Brienne to assist the Order of Knights Templar, who had allied themselves with Bohemond, in combating Levon's hostility over the issue of Antioch.

Hugh did not shrug from showing where his sympathies lay; he openly favoured all opponents of Bohemond and enthusiastically sided himself with the court of King Levon. As a token of his alliance with Levon, Hugh gave in marriage his two half-sisters: Sybille (Amaury's daughter by Isabel) to Levon himself, and Helvis, to Levon's grandnephew Raymond-Roupen. King Levon was 60 years old when he took the 12-year old Sybille as his wife. She bore him a daughter in 1215 to whom was given her mother's name Zabel (Sybille, Isabel).

King Hugh seemed to have had little contact with the Holy Land until the Fifth Crusade in 1217. When the Lateran Council was convened in 1215, the prospect of another crusade was well in the making. Emperor Frederick II of Germany had already committed himself to waging the new holy war. However, the French, who were reluctant to fight under German leadership, delayed the mobilization of their forces until well into 1217. The successor of Pope Innocent III, Pope Honorius III (1216-27) issued instructions which stipulated that the crusading forces should assemble in Cyprus. By mid September 1217, Leopold IV, Duke of Austria, was the first monarch to reach Syria, followed by King Andrew II of Hungary. King Hugh led the Cypriot contingent, accompanied by several luminaries including the constable of Cyprus Walter of Caesarea, archbishop of Nicosia Eustorgue (Eustorage) de Montaigu of Auvergne and the king's two uncles, John and Philip d'Ibelin. However, Hugh's involvement in the holy struggle was to be marginal at best. When King Andrew decided to return home, Hugh accompanied him as far as Tripoli where the Lusignans had gathered to celebrate the marriage of Hugh's half-sister Melisende to Bohemond IV. Hugh was taken ill shortly thereafter and died on 10 January 1218 at the age of 23. His body was brought

to Cyprus and interred in the church of the Order of the Hospitallers in Nicosia. He left as heir his son Henry aged eight months, born on 3 May 1217.

King Hugh's brief reign was not without its ecclesiastical difficulties which took shape after Hugh's interference in the election of the new archbishop of Nicosia. On the death of Alan, the first archbishop of Nicosia, the bishops of Nicosia nominated two candidates but had assured Hugh that they would elect whichever he favoured, and thus Durand, the treasurer of the Latin archbishopric in Nicosia, was elected. On the basis of a preliminary objection to this election, lodged by a few Greek bishops of the Cyprus curia, the pope referred the dispute to mediation by the patriarch of Jerusalem who subsequently declared the election invalid. Hugh protested against the patriarch's decision by sending the archdeacon of Famagusta to Rome. But his efforts failed to convince the pope.

Thus, a new order was issued from the papal office directing the bishops of Cyprus to elect another archbishop. Consequently, Eustorage became the new archbishop of Nicosia and reigned until 1250. It was at once clear that the ploys of the first king of Cyprus, Amaury, which were intended to give the Latin Church in Cyprus prominence over the Greek Church, were not to be entirely free of local Greek influence. To add further to this general malaise, charges of discrimination were entered in the papal office by the Latin patriarch of Constantinople, Thomas Morosini, in which he complained that the Latin bishops of Cyprus were receiving special privileges which were denied to their counter-parts in Constantinople. Though the pope rebuffed the patriarch's charges, he nonetheless summoned the archbishop of Nicosia to Rome for an interview. Clerical episodes such as these during the reign of King Hugh I demonstrated all too convincingly the rigid policy of the Holy Roman See; and that policy was Rome's absolute control over church and state affairs in the Christian kingdoms of the eastern Mediterranean.

Henry I (1218-53)

Philip d'Ibelin and his brother John jointly were the principal guardian and regent of the infant Henry, and successfully administered the political affairs of Cyprus during the early years following Hugh's death. Hugh's wife Alice, though in principle also a regent of the kingdom and a guardian of her infant son, was far removed from the power plays that reflected the constantly shifting political loyalties and rivalries among the feudal lords of Cyprus, Acre and Jerusalem. The *haute court* of Cyprus on several occasions had rejected Alice's attempts at claiming the vacant throne and, much to the dismay of the barons and the lords of Cyprus, even Emperor Frederick II at one point put in a claim to the regency of the kingdom on the basis that the infant King Henry was his vassal. Frederick, aware that his father Emperor Henry VI had bestowed the first crown of Cyprus on the infant's grandfather Amaury de Lusignan,

demanded Henry's vassalage and insisted that the regency of Cyprus was his legitimate feudal inheritance. Though his claim went unheeded at the time and produced no immediate support from the nobility of the courts, Cyprus was to suffer the consequences of Frederick's unrequited ambition nearly a decade later in the shape of a bloody and protracted civil war.

The remarkable and intense feudalism during this period in the history of Cyprus lasted until about 1236. Unfortunately, however, an all-encompassing chronological description of the convoluted history of the island during these turbulent years is beyond the scope of our immediate interest. It involved the rising influence and the power of the Ibelins in Cyprus coincident with the deterioration of the vanishing power of the Latin principalities in Palestine. But for the purposes of this narrative, it will be beneficial to highlight this episode of history whilst focusing attention specifically on three interrelated issues which bear significantly on the future political developments in Cilician Armenia. These issues are as follows: 1) the role of the Ibelins in the Cypriot monarchy; 2) the crusade of Emperor Frederick II and the effect of his excursion into Cyprus and 3) the fall of the Latin East.[13]

Role of the Ibelins in the Cypriot monarchy

Henry's mother Alice was categorically unsuccessful in securing for herself either the officially endorsed role of regent or of guardian to her infant son Henry. The barons of Cyprus instead appointed Alice's relatives from the politically influential family of the Ibelins to serve as baillies (regents) and administrative chiefs, the first of whom was her uncle Philip, who served for nearly a decade until his death in 1227. He was followed by his brother John. When Amaury, Henry's grandfather, relinquished his claim to the office of constable of Jerusalem in his bid to make peace with Henry of Champagne in 1197, the latter appointed John d'Ibelin to occupy that position, an appointment which John held until his resignation in exchange for the lordship of Beirut.

But now, John's dual role as regent and chief administrator of Cyprus could not be justified on any legal grounds save perhaps the political pressure that the collective influence of the Ibelins could place on the island's nobility. But the court's disregard of Alice's right to the regency had created deep political rifts within its nobility and had caused the general public to view the Ibelins as usurpers of the crown. Thus, when Emperor Frederick II stopped in Cyprus on his way to the Holy Land in 1228, the emergence of partisan alliances in the ranks of the people of Cyprus was inevitable. Moreover, to circumvent Frederick's claim on Cyprus, three years before his arrival on the island, the Ibelins had the eight-year old Henry secretly crowned as the island's king in defiance of the emperor and without his consent — an act which Frederick considered a violation of his imperial authority.

Therefore, on arrival in Cyprus he set out to dislodge the Ibelins from power and to claim the regency for himself. For the emperor there was no

contest. He succeeded in forcing John to hand over the four heavily fortified royal castles in the north (Kyrenia, Kantara, Buffavento and St Hilarion) where he installed new imperial garrisons, and then abolished the administrative authority of the Ibelins and replaced them with his own loyal supporters on the island. His presence in Cyprus, however, had only temporarily subdued the people's displeasure there with the high-handed approach he had taken in resolving the island's domestic affairs, and when he ultimately left the island for Acre, the disquieted public erupted in revolt against their new administrators on the island and turned the event into a bloody full-blown conflict that soon became the protracted civil war known as the War of the Lombards — named after Frederick's German and Italian mercenaries who came from Langobardia, the old Byzantine province in southern Italy. John d'Ibelin refused to resign his regency in Cyprus and so, Frederick took John and two of his sons with him to Palestine as hostages, but they were subsequently released from their bondage when Frederick departed the Holy Land victoriously in 1229.

His conquests there had restored Jerusalem to the Franks together with considerable territory in northern Palestine and a few places between the Holy City and the Mediterranean coast. He had delivered to the West what all its Christian military efforts had failed to achieve since the fall of Jerusalem to the armies of Saladin in 1187. On his way back to Europe, Frederick interrupted his journey in Limassol to officiate, as emperor, the marriage of young Henry to Alice of Montferrat, a daughter of the emperor's vassal, William Montferrat.

In the years following Emperor Frederick's conquests in Palestine, the Latin wealth there and in Syria had shrunk in the face of growing Islam. Consequently, more emphasis was placed on shifting the wealth of the Franks to Cyprus. The raging civil war in Cyprus had ended in 1233- the same year Henry had come of age. The young king proceeded courageously to counter Frederick's imperial authority in the Levant. He thus orchestrated the elimination of Frederick's last remaining garrison in Tyre, which effectively ended the Emperor's influence in Syria. Frederick's final sliver of pretext for meddling in the affairs of Henry's Cyprus was crushed when in 1247 Pope Innocent IV (1243-54) favoured Henry and formally declared that the sovereign of Cyprus was not a vassal of the emperor. However, Frederick's damage to Cyprus was all too telling; he had left for Henry a kingdom in total disarray and festering poverty. The cost of the civil war had been heavy.

King Henry's relationship with Cilician Armenia was good. A strong relation between the two kingdoms was important and was sought by each kingdom. In fact it has been speculated that had it not been for the establishment of the Lusignan dynasty in Cyprus, in all probability the kingdom of Cilician Armenia may have, out of necessity, established itself on this island. The bond between these two fluid kingdoms in the Levant was further strengthened after the death of Henry's wife Alice of Montferrat.[14] In

1238, the king took Stephanie, the sister of King Hetum I,[15] as his second wife. This marriage to Stephanie was mentioned in an inscription on the monastery of Holy Saviour in Cilician Armenia.

By 1237 the hostilities between the Armenian kingdom and Antioch had come to an end. But disregarding this precarious truce, the Knights Templar attempted to renew their excursions into Armenian territories on grounds that two of their members had been brutally tortured to death by Hetum I. The Templars were also encouraged into action by Bohemond V, who was anxious to avenge the murder of his brother Philip — the first husband of Queen Zabel of Cilicia. Prince Philip was imprisoned in Sis by the Armenians in 1224 for stealing the crown jewels of Armenia then killed by poisoning. However, Pope Gregory IX (1227-41) restrained the Templars as well as Bohemond from taking any hostile action against Armenia. Bohemond, however, was eventually reconciled with Hetum but this reconciliation had to wait until 1250.[16]

In 1246, Henry became the regent of the kingdom of Jerusalem after the death of his mother Alice of Champagne (daughter of Henry of Champagne and second wife of Bohemond V of Tripoli/Antioch). The responsibilities for governing Jerusalem once again rested in the hands of the king of Cyprus. Henry took part in the crusade led by the king of France Louis IX in 1248 against the Mamluk sultanate in North Africa. It was hoped that by conquering the seat of the sultanate in Cairo, Egypt, the survival of the crusader states in the eastern Mediterranean can be ensured. Henry stood by the side of the French king at their victorious battle for Damietta on the banks of the river Nile. Soon afterwards, however, Henry lost his enthusiasm for the crusade and forthrightly returned to Cyprus to care for his dying wife, Stephanie. She died childless in 1250.

Henry married for the third time and on this occasion his bride was Plaisance, daughter of his step-father Bohemond V by his marriage to Lucienne of Segni (near Rome). Plaisance bore Henry a son a few months before his death in Nicosia on 18 January 1253. His son and successor, Hugh II (1253-67) died before reaching the age of majority. With his death, the house of Lusignan came to an end in the direct male line. The next relative in line of succession was Hugh's cousin, Hugh of Antioch who became Hugh III of Cyprus.

Hugh III of Cyprus (1267-1284)

Hugh of Antioch, as the son of Isabel de Lusignan, adopted his mother's name in an effort to emphasise and mostly legitimise his right to a dynastic continuity in the kingdom of Cyprus. On Christmas Day 1267, Hugh was crowned in Nicosia by the archbishop of Jerusalem, and in 1269 after elaborate political and legal manoeuvring for his right to the regency of Jerusalem through Henry I, he succeeded in being crowned king of Jerusalem in the cathedral of Tyre.[17]

However, under pressure from the Mamluks, the Latin East was well on its way to fragmentation as the regional lords chose to make their own separate peace pacts with the Muslims. The immediate outcome of these pacts was that the Latin kingdoms in the East were rushed into making great territorial concessions without forethought or considered consent.

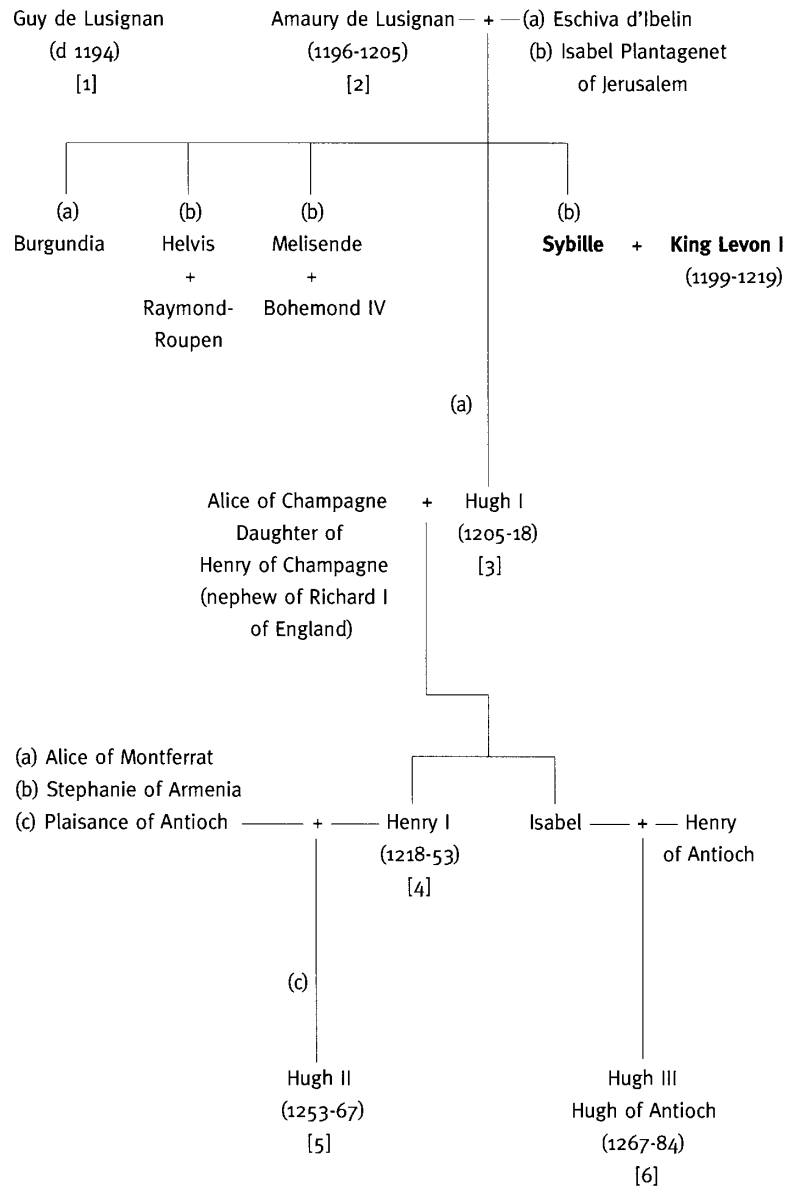
Hugh made gallant efforts in using his power and royal authority where he could and when possible. On several occasions he led Cypriot troops to Acre to help the beleaguered Christians there, but he was unable to wrest the initiative from the determined Mamluks. In October 1276, he departed from Acre permanently and thereafter remained powerless and unable to do anything constructive to help the Latin East in its increasingly hopeless struggles against the Mamluks. King Hugh's misfortunes and failures were finally brought to an end by his death on 24 March 1284. He was succeeded by his eldest surviving son John, whose death in the following year brought the epileptic Henry to the throne of Cyprus as Henry II, but the Lusignan dynasty in the Latin East was destined to end soon with the Mamluks' conquest of Acre.

On 4 May 1291, Henry arrived from Cyprus at the head of a large force of Cypriot reinforcements but he was unable to stem the tide of the Muslim assault along the entire length of the high walls that protected Acre (plate 19) and on 15 May the city fell. King Henry and his brother Amaury were able to escape the ensuing massacre. Less than a week later, the city of Tyre also fell which was followed, in rapid succession, by Sidon and Beirut. The entire Mediterranean coast of Palestine was devastated by the Mamluks in their deliberate effort to ensure that the Latin Christians could never return in force. In 1306 Amaury, then the dispossessed lord of Tyre, used his brother's epilepsy as a pretext to wrest the crown of Cyprus from Henry, who was exiled to Cilician Armenia where he remained in the custody of King Oshin I. However, Henry eventually returned to Cyprus after the murder of Amaury in 1310.

The loss of Acre in May 1291 was the turning point in the history of the crusades which set in motion the beginning of the end of the Latin wealth and influence in Palestine. Although Henry II has often been accused of being a weak leader and blamed for the fall of Acre, the truth of the matter is that the Christians in the closing years of the 13th century lacked the necessary military resources, the manpower and, most of all, the collective commitment to continue their hopeless struggle for a cause that no longer meant universal glory to all Christians. No doubt, the Mamluks' conquest of Acre and the subsequent surrender of the remaining cities and fortresses in the eastern Mediterranean became the catalyst for the gradual deterioration of the security of Cilician Armenia, which had enjoyed some protection under the watchful eye of its Western allies. But now, in the early years of the 14th century, Cilician Armenia once again found itself essentially defenceless against an aggressive Mamluk sultanate with far superior power and resources.

The Lusignans of Cyprus and their connection to Cilician Armenia

(numbers in brackets designate order of ascension to rule)

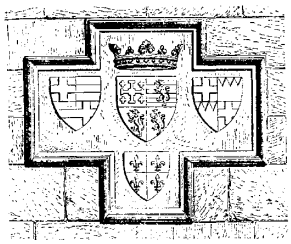


In retrospect, the frantic efforts of Hayton the chroicler to secure the safety of Cilician Armenia by advocating a crusade from Cyprus and Armenia may now be understood in a new light.

But, indeed, he was hoping against all hope. The hopes of his ancestors, who had struggled to establish Cilicia as a bastion of Christendom in the crossroads of east and west, were dimmed by the very forces that had raised them. Byzantium was at once a friend and foe of Cilician Armenia but the empire was blinded by its zeal for power and intoxicated by its self-appointed role of bearer of Christian truth. The West, on the other hand, blinded by Roman ecclesiastical influence unwittingly conspired to suffocate the very ally that the brave crusaders had needed for their early achievements. In the remaining decades in the life of the Cilician kingdom in the mid 14th century, the rule of this Cinderella Christian kingdom passed into the hands of those whose days in the Levant had already run the course.

The Franks of the Cilician Armenian political wilderness during the three decades preceding the kingdom's final curtain were themselves on the verge of entering the ranks of history. Their role in the Levant was fast coming to a close in the face of the all-consuming Islam. A century earlier, King Hetum I had correctly assessed the Latin position in the Levant. His conclusion was that their status quo was not favourable to the Christian cause that they had strived to achieve by force; and so now, he was vindicated. But, the complacent objectivity of the West towards Hetum had not only undermined the safety of his small Armenian kingdom, but a century later created the political and military circumstances that were to permanently banish the Franks from the Levant.

Chapter 6



The 'Complete Cyprus' coat of arms after the union of the crowns of Jerusalem, Cyprus & Armenia

The last Latin connections

The fading dream

During most of the 13th century Cilician Armenia had become an open battlefield between the warring Mongols and the Mamluks. The history of the Armenian alliances with the Mongols sought by the Hetumians throughout this period did not earn them any favours in the courts of the Mamluk sultans. In the course of the two Mamluk incursions into Armenian territories in 1322 and 1335, King Levon IV himself was reduced to a mere object of disdain and eventually murdered by his own people while large numbers of them fled the kingdom for safer havens in Cyprus. But the Mamluks were not yet finished with their retaliations against Cilician Armenia. They came back in 1347 and within a decade they had annexed Adana and Tarsus into their empire. By 1375 Sis and Anazarba were also taken, which in effect retired the memory of the small kingdom of Cilician Armenia into the annals of history.

The seeds of Lusignan rule in Cilicia

As we have seen, the succession to the throne of Armenia in 1308 fell upon Oshin I, brother of Hetum II. However, his death in 1320 after 12 years of tempestuous rule, dominated by religious strife, paved the way for the ascension of his ten-year old son Levon (IV) whose misfortunes at the hands of Malik Nasir eventually led to his assassination in 1341. His father Oshin had unwittingly become involved in the royal affairs of Cyprus by sheltering in his court the exiled Henry II of Cyprus (de Lusignan).

The epileptic Henry had been usurped by his brother Amaury de Lusignan (both sons of Hugh III of Antioch) and exiled to Sis to be kept under the care of King Oshin I, whose sister Isabel was married to Amaury. Oshin in his own naive convictions had considered this marriage a secure political deal for obtaining the outside help and support which he badly needed for his slowly crumbling kingdom. But Cyprus in the early 14th century was fast attracting the attention of the advancing Muslims and its sole concern was not King Oshin, nor Cilicia, but its own survival. Thus, as a result of Oshin's failure to gain the help that he needed during this crucial period of Islamic

expansionism, the first half of the 14th century gradually ushered in the end of the isolated kingdom. Cilician Armenia fell into a state of constant feudal anarchy that culminated in the ascension of the house of Lusignan of Cyprus to the throne of Cilicia.

The ruling classes of Cilician Armenia during this transition phase were the descendants of the Cypriot royal houses and of the Latin barons who had lost their lands in Palestine. Eighteen kings from the house of Lusignan ruled Cyprus over a time span of nearly 300 years (1192-1489). They all enjoyed the additional title of 'King of Jerusalem' and eventually acquired the title of *'Roi d'Arménie'* but not until after the death of Levon V in Paris, France in 1393. Hence from the year 1393 to the end of the Lusignan dynasty in Cyprus in 1489, the rulers of Cyprus carried the title 'King of Cyprus, Jerusalem and Armenia.' The Lusignan rule of Cyprus was eventually brought to an end by the Venetians whose dominance of the island lasted nearly a century before the Turks ended it in 1571.

The demise of the Latin East at the hands of the Muslims in 1291 confined the influence of the Christian Church in the eastern Mediterranean to two remaining Christian states. Cyprus, though still a stronghold of the Latin kings, and once the bastion of the crusading strategists, was now a potential target for further Mamluk offensives. The only other surviving Christian state in the region of the eastern Mediterranean shores was the kingdom of Cilician Armenia.

Guy de Lusignan, Constantine II (1342-44)

As mentioned earlier, during the minority of Levon IV in 1320, his regent the lord of Korikos, Oshin Pail (Chief Oshin), had made several shrewd political moves to safeguard his own political ambitions to the crown. One such move was to exile to Rhodes the two sons of Amaury de Lusignan, John de Lusignan and his brother Bohemond. However, nine years later in 1329 they were recalled to Cilicia by King Levon himself. John and Bohemond were Levon's first cousins through his paternal aunt Isabel, and John was made constable of Armenia while his brother Bohemond became lord of Korikos.[1] Constable John was quick to indulge himself in hedonistic pleasures and insisted that all Armenians conform to the ceremonial rites of the Roman Church.

When Levon IV was assassinated at the hands of an angry mob in 1341, the crown was offered to John but he declined the honour and instead proposed for the throne his elder brother Guy, who at the time was in the service of Emperor John V of Byzantium.[2] The two brothers John and Guy were active political and military figures in their own rights and both were deeply committed to the Latin cause and to the supremacy of the Roman Church in the Levant. But this uncompromising attitude so infuriated the Armenian populace that they eventually rose up in arms and murdered Constable John. Consequently, Guy de Lusignan was urged by the barons to summarily

proceeded to Sis where, in 1342, Guy was anointed King Constantine II.

Unfortunately for Guy, the Mamluks' appetite for territorial expansion took the form of a series of renewed attacks on Cilicia occurring in 1343 and 1344. These attacks came at a time when the kingdom was in a state of lamentable disunion without a strong head of state to unite the kingdom against the Mamluks. The lords of the land had become divided into factions and were heavily embroiled in the execution of their own private feudal interests. Guy was left out in the cold. He became increasingly isolated and forced to appoint to key administrative offices his own Latin relations in whom he could trust and depend. His appointees took possession of the kingdom's traditional castles and ruled without impunity their surrounding towns and communities. As a consequence, religious strife once again came to the fore especially when compliance and conformity with Roman rites were demanded of the Orhodox Armenian populace.

But papal mediation in these internal grievances, or help against the threat of the Egyptian Mamluks in Cilicia, were not forthcoming as Pope Clement VI (1342-52) had grander plans concerning the predicaments of his empire in the Aegean Sea at the hands of the Turks of Anatolia. Papal resources were thus diverted into a fleet of naval forces consisting of Venetians, Cypriots and Hospitallers, which in October 1344 successfully captured the port of Smyrna on the west coast of Anatolia.[3] It was only after this victory in Smyrna that help for Guy in Armenia received papal attention but it is not certain whether material support of any significance ever arrived. Papal sympathy towards the Armenian predicament took the form of a direct appeal in 1347 to King Edward III of England for his consideration of the plight of Guy in Armenia as vassal of the English crown.[4] Guy sent his ambassador to London with a letter he signed as *'Guido Armenorum rex'* (Guy King of Armenia)[5] asking Edward for reinforcements to balance the Mamluk threats in the East.[6] His ambassadors also carried the same requests for help to the court of King Philip VI of France,[7] but all these efforts came to nothing.

Yet, Guy continued to impose inflexible pro-Latin policies upon his Armenian subjects and vigorously opposed the Armenian Church. These religious impositions became a sensitive issue in matters of faith not only in the general populace but also among the Armenian clergy and their bishops. They added internal religious dissension to Guy's plethora of external security problems posed by Egyptian and Turkish forces. Furthermore, the pope's complacency towards any material help for the struggling Armenian nation made the pro-Latin stance of its rulers increasingly difficult to impose and rapidly fuelled the flames of discontent. The cumulative effect was to further divide the Armenians irreconcilably into pro-Latin 'unionists' and 'traditionalists' — the latter unwilling to abandon centuries of ecclesiastical autonomy.[8] This religious strife strained the domestic relationships to the breaking point when in 1344 the Armenians rebelled and murdered Guy and his brother Bohemond along with an entourage of Latin nobles.

Constantine III (1344-63)

Constantine II was succeeded by Constantine III, the son of Baldwin of Negher, who himself was a grandson of King Hugh III of Cyprus and marshal of Armenia.[9] Though not of Armenian royal blood, Constantine III was related to the house of Oshin Pail, Lord of Korikos, by marriage to Oshin's daughter Marie (Mary). The new king embarked upon a concerted appeal for material support from Pope Clement VI and the West to help him stem the tide of Mamluk insurgencies which had already claimed the important and vital port of Ayas. Again, as usual, any papal aid to Cilicia carried with it the demand for Armenian subordination to the Roman creed.[10] It is interesting that at this point in Cilician history when the demise of the Armenian kingdom was almost assured at the hands of the Mamluks, the Roman curia continued to insist its position that the only remaining kingdom in Asia Minor, a bastion of Christianity in the hub of Islam for nearly three centuries, should succumb to papal subordination before any assistance could be approved. The stark irony is that the West, preoccupied with the defence of its precarious possession of Smyrna and with its hopeless collaboration with the Greeks against the menacing Turks, could not envision an Asian subcontinent blanketed with the green of Islam that was eventually to pose a threat to the very survival of Europe. They could not see the woods because of the trees.

Constantine was relentless in his pleas for help. He sought for assistance from the Hospitallers, from King Hugh IV of Cyprus and from the Venetian fleet to defend the coastal waters of Cilicia. All responded with silence, all awaited the unambiguous approval of Clement VI before they would spring into action. Yet they must have known that that approval would not be forthcoming. In 1346, virtually blackmailed into doctrinal subordination, a formal profession of the Catholic faith was declared by the nobility of Cilician Armenia on behalf of the unspoken majority in return for the promise of phantom help. In the face of the mounting Mamluk threat, Constantine was thus forced to go it alone. He gallantly organized a small army and appointed an Armenian military lord named Libarit as his general.

Some marginal help came from King Hugh and from an Armenian cavalry general named Asdvadzadur (God given/sent) who brought a few troops with him from Rhodes. They fought bravely against the Mamluks and succeeded in routing them from Cilicia. The important port of Ayas was restored to the Armenians, but only temporarily. At the end of 1347, the Egyptian fleet blockaded the port of Ayas whilst the Turks of Iconium marched into Tarsus. These concerted Muslim campaigns, however, failed in the end because of Malik Nasir's death and the ensuing Ayyubids' internal power struggle for succession in Cairo. But a circumspect Constantine, determined to secure reinforcements from the West, dispatched the former Armenian patriarch Hagop II (1327-41) to meet Pope Clement VI in Avignon and persuade his

holiness that the Armenian Church has been unjustly accused of doctrinal falsehoods and therefore the pope's help for the Armenian kingdom must not be denied nor delayed. The patriarch returned home disappointed from what surely was a pointless mission, but his efforts pleased Constantine and earned him a second term as patriarch (1355-59) after the death of Mukhitar I (1341-55).

The coming of Levon V (1365-75)

Constantine III reigned for 18 years and, most unusually, died a natural death in 1363. For the ensuing two years the throne of Armenia remained unoccupied as the lords of the land hesitated to nominate a successor from Constantine's family — nor did they have the courage to elect one of their own. Although Pope Urban V (1362-70) wrote to the lords of Armenia exhorting them to have the courage to elect a new head of their nation, he left no doubt that he favoured Levon, an illegitimate nephew of Guy (Constantine II) but nonetheless a descendant of both Latins and Armenians.[11] The throne was offered to Levon but he toyed with the idea for a full nine years before he finally went for it in 1374. He smelled a lack of unanimity in the air behind the offer, especially in the face of aggressive Genoese incursions into Cypriot waters.

Thus Levon refrained from seriously pursuing the offer.[12] In the meantime, some claimed the succession for the heirs of Guy, but eventually in 1365 a less known first cousin of Constantine III, a great-grandson of King Hugh III of Cyprus,, was placed on the throne as Constantine IV, much to the dismay of King Peter I of Cyprus (also a great-grandson of Hugh) who was not entirely indifferent to the possibility of adding the throne of Armenia to his list of royal crowns. Although Constantine's reign lasted nearly eight years, his rule as the monarch was unremarkable, and, as was the custom of the day, disliked, unpopular and ineffective rulers were summarily deposed either by sending them into exile or by assassination. Constantine IV was no exception. Aware of his marginal political clout as well as of his inferior military prowess against the might of the Mamluks, he had considered appeasing the Egyptians by handing over to them his meagre kingdom thus avoiding certain bloodshed. But he seemed to have ignored the will of his native Armenians and their blind commitment to their Christian faith. As usual, they took the matter into their own hands and assassinated Constantine in 1373. He was survived by his wife Marie, the once widowed wife of his predecessor King Constantine III.

Levon's father John de Lusignan had died about the time Guy de Lusignan was murdered in 1344. Constantine III, who followed Guy to the throne of Cilicia seemed to have been set on denying all claimants of the Lusignan family to any future role in the Armenian monarchy. Hence, Levon at the age of two, was imprisoned in Korikos along with his five-year-old brother Bohemond and their mother Soldana, the mistress of their deceased father. Orders were given for their murder, but with the help of local Armenian

sympathisers they were allowed to escape and take refuge in Cyprus under the care of King Peter I. When Constantine IV was murdered in 1373, Levon now aged 31 was living in Cyprus and owed feudal allegiance to King Peter II of Cyprus. Levon's subordinate position to the king was a result of his marriage to Marguerite de Soisson, who was endowed with considerable property as fief of the king. In principle, therefore, Levon was not free to leave.

But, in an effort to help the widowed Queen Marie in Cilicia, who was now alone facing the growing Mamluk danger, Pope Gregory XI (1370-78) offered an interim solution by recommending the name of Otto, Duke of Brunswick as an appropriate consort for Marie. In the meantime, the entrepreneurial Genoese had taken Famagusta and were levying extortionist war indemnities on Peter II, who felt pressured into finding ways to ease his financial burden. He thus allowed Levon to leave Cyprus but not before the latter had renounced all claims to his wife's fiefdom and agreed to transfer the assets to Eleanor of Aragon, the mother of Peter II. Levon left the island and headed for Sis. Upon arrival there he was united with his wife and mother who had preceded him to Korikos. Soon thereafter on 14 September 1374 he was anointed King Levon V in the cathedral of St Sophia in Sis. The coronation ceremonies were conducted jointly by the Latin archbishop of Hebron and by the Armenian patriarch Boghos I of Sis.[13] His wife Marguerite stood by his side and was simultaneously crowned his queen.

The writing on the wall

King Levon's enthusiasm to rule was shattered early. His immediate concern was to gather a small army with which he had hoped to begin his assault on the Mamluks in Tarsus. He confided the plan to his closest confidants, but they, treacherously, notified the Mamluk governor of Tarsus of Levon's imminent military ambitions whilst also falsely convincing Peter II of Cyprus and the Genoese of Famagusta that Levon was colluding with John de Lusignan of Antioch, uncle of Peter II, to invade Cyprus. The perpetrators' purpose was to stem the possibility of military help reaching Cilicia from Cyprus which could be used by Levon in his mission against the Mamluks.

King Levon, throughout his life, had remained a devout member of the Roman Church, but his confidants and the nobility of his court had never sincerely advocated the union of the traditional Armenian Orthodox Church with that of Rome, an objective ardently advocated by Levon — a Lusignan at heart. Chief among his opponents was the patriarch Boghos I who supported turning the kingdom over to the Mamluks instead of shedding Armenian blood. This he believed was the preferred course of action as the temporal power of Islam in Cilicia was certainly transient as opposed to Rome's more permanent and insidious doctrinal corruption. The Mamluks wasted no time in capitalising on the Cilician internal political divisions and launched a

massive attack in 1374 under the command of Malik al-Ashraf Sha'ban. He attacked Sis and after two months of siege entered the city spreading death and devastation in his wake. The royal tombs were desecrated and their relics were destroyed. Monasteries were demolished and all resident priests were blinded by red hot irons. The bishops, silenced by cutting out their tongues, were permitted to live as living monuments to the vengeance of al-Ashraf. Faced with such a ruthless enemy, Levon was forced to flee taking with him his wife, his daughter Marie and her husband Shahan. They took refuge in the fortress of Gaban, but after nine months under siege, Gaban surrendered. Thus on 13 April 1375 King Levon V, his family and entourage were taken prisoner and removed to Cairo.

After five years in captivity Shahan was able to secure his own freedom and thereupon set out earnestly campaigning for the release of his father-in-law. He was joined by the fervent appeals of the Franciscan monk Jean Dardel who had befriended Levon and become the imprisoned king's private counsellor and secretary. Together in 1379 they sought through the intercession of Pope Urban VI (1378-89) the help of King John I of Castile and were successful in raising funds which later were used for freeing Levon. By this time Malik al-Ashraf and his successor al-Mansur had both died and the sultanate of Cairo was now in the hands of a six-year-old named Malik Salih. But despite this obstacle, the Spanish funds and effective mediation eventually paid off and the Armenian royal family was successfully ransomed on 7 October 1382.

They immediately travelled to Jerusalem on a pilgrimage of thanksgiving. There Levon left his wife and daughter and sailed to Europe for an audience with the pope. He then joined a papal legate to mediate the conflict in Flanders (1382-89) as part of the Hundred Years War between the English and the French thrones. The now re-vitalised Levon found in his new respectability and responsibility the perfect opportunity to campaign for the benefit of his own cause and to exploit royal sentiments both in London and Paris. But he was to be immensely disappointed. All he could secure was the goodwill of kings Richard II of England and Charles VI of France as they declined to show interest even in the remotest possibility of Levon's return to the throne of Cilicia. Frustrated and dejected, Levon died in Paris on 29 November 1393. His remains were interred in the basilica of St Denis in the outskirts of the French capital (plates 28&29). His wife and daughter, who had remained in Jerusalem since their pilgrimage in 1382, both died in 1405 after years of suffering from the anguish of separation from the king. They are buried there in the nave of the cathedral of Sourp Hagop (Saint James) immediately outside the narthex housing the holy altar of St James.

Levon the ambassador

In June 1384, Levon was received enthusiastically in the court of the 15-year-old King Charles VI of France. Levon knew little Latin and less French but he

was prepared to put his plans forward for an Armenian crusade to recover the lost lands of his kingdom. When he addressed the members of the king's council in the autumn of 1385, he was careful not to describe his mission as such but appealed to the French for the collective good of both England and France and offered his help as an impartial negotiator.[14] In the winter of the same year he took his case to England. He arrived at Dover where he was received by the earls of Cambridge and Buckingham, uncles to King Richard II. Levon was escorted to London in royal fashion to celebrate Christmas at Eltham Palace with the king.[15] He conveyed his people's great admiration for the English but rebuked Richard for fighting the French instead of leading a new Christian crusade to recover Cilician Armenia and then free the Holy Land from the yoke of Islam. Richard not amused by Levon's tactlessness but, impressed by his conviction and his proposals, agreed in January of 1386 to open negotiations with the French and declared this 'because of the prayers and entreaties of our cousin the King of Armenia.'[16]

Levon's heroic pleas to both the French and the English came to naught. His first task of bringing the two warring nations to the peace table was never achieved. This was the necessary precondition for the success of his ultimate plan because whilst France and England remained at war with each other, it was virtually certain that they would turn a deaf ear to his message. When Levon was in Paris he befriended Philippe de Mézières, an ardent and staunch supporter of the idea of crusade against the infidels. It was Philippe who pressured Richard of England and the dukes of York and Gloucester into admitting that aiding the fragmented Christian East must surely be their solemn duty. Instead of the English fighting the French, their objectives would be best served by the restoration of the kingdoms of Cilician Armenia and Jerusalem. Philippe must have had an impressive influence on Levon if for no other reason than that the two had shared a common dream, a dream which as late as the late 14th century had not yet entirely faded from the psyche of the descendants of those who fought the early crusades.

The last king of Cilician Armenia was not the only 'lone crusader' whom history remembers as a self-appointed ambassador with a noble purpose. There were others before him who, like Levon, had simply refused to acknowledge the futility of exploiting religious imperialism as a means for self-promotion and personal gains. They were all noble in their convictions but not so nimble in their capacity for objective judgments. They had all preached the same old trade but each had cloaked its false virtues in a manner they were certain would fit the circumstances of their generation. They had all failed in their missions because they had failed to recognise that religious imperialism was attractive only if it promised wealth and power to its willing participants. Otto von Grandison, the Swiss self-glorifying crusader, was one of the earliest advocates who, in the late 13th century after the fall of Acre, appealed for intervention in Armenia by means of a landing at the port of Ayas to launch a renewed campaign against the infidels.[17] His appeals fell on

deaf ears. He was followed by Hayton the Chronicler whose concerted attempts at enticing the West to commit to renewed attacks on Islam from bases in Cyprus and Armenia were not entirely *ad majorem Dei gloriam*. His personal dedication to a new crusade in the early 14th century, which he boldly outlined in his book which he presented to Pope Clement V, may not have been entirely a holy objective. Hayton's own political disagreement with King Hetum II may have driven him to actively persuade the West to renewed warfare with Islam as his covert means for the fulfilment of his own political agenda.

But Hayton was not to be the last — his contemporary, the Venetian Marino Sanudo Torsello (1270-1343), — who, far from being a religious zealot but true to his Venetian enterprising instinct, had devoted much of his life to formulating plans for the political and economic domination of the eastern Mediterranean. Unlike the ideas of his predecessors for the use of large-scale military forces, Marino combined sea and land tactics into a single major strategy that would involve economic embargoes and political alliances aimed at undermining the power of the Mamluks.[18] However, by the middle of the 14th century the reality of the Latin East was not such that it would encourage enterprising sovereign monarchs of the West to indulge in extravagant undertakings against the menace of Islam in Asia and Anatolia. Their collective past experiences had lost them the appetite for chivalry and had taught them the true cost of their temporal victories. Their crusading spirit had become extinct; caution, prudence and selfishness now dominated their agendas. For the monarchs and the princes of the West, King Levon's Armenia was as lost a cause as was the Latin East.

Intrigues in Cyprus

The kingdom of Cyprus had reached the zenith of its political power by the time Peter I, the son of Maria d'Ibelin and his unremarkable father Hugh IV, came to the throne in 1359. Although he ascended the throne at a time when his generation in Christendom had lost the collective ability to fight for God and glory, the romance of the past crusades was still deeply etched in the minds of the bearers of Christian myths and values. This fruitless preoccupation and obsession with the now outmoded ideal of crusade, fired with the urge to subdue Islam but actually driven by economic motives, began to stir Peter. His interest in a campaign against the Egyptian Mamluks had germinated from his concern over competition the Egyptian port of Alexandria was posing to Cypriot profits from the western trade that came to the port of Famagusta. Hence, in 1362, in the pretext that a new crusade was necessary to recover Jerusalem, Peter sailed for Europe to seek the material support of his western allies. His motives had remained true to the tradition of the feudal nobility of the Middle Ages. King Peter's first port of call was Venice where his campaign met with limited success but gathered enough momentum to impel him to

continue gathering the help he needed for his eventual rendezvous with the Mamluks. He left Venice on 27 June 1365.

Whilst in Italy, Peter received in 1363 an offer from the nobility of Cilicia to accept the crown of Armenia which had become vacant as a result of the death of its Lusignan king, Constantine III. Peter proposed offering the crown instead to Bohemond de Lusignan, brother of Levon V, but this plan evaporated with Bohemond's death in Venice in the same year. It is certain that subsequently Peter accepted the crown and called himself king of Armenia at the coercion of the Cilician barons. He even had silver coins struck for the occasion showing him on a horseback[19] but the new monarch never had a chance to visit his phantom kingdom. The reality of the situation turned out differently. As the brother of Bohemond, Levon, now 23, was a natural successor to the throne of Armenia and Peter, though privately resentful, could not openly oppose Pope Urban V's support of Levon. The king had an audience with the pope in Rome and, in his return journey from Italy, carried the pontif's letter to the Armenians encouraging them to support Levon's ascension to the throne. However, before Peter was able to return to Cyprus in 1367 to deliver the wishes expressed in the papal letter regarding the Armenian throne, the barons there two years earlier in 1365 had elected Constantine IV to the crown and there was little that Peter could do but suppress the papal letter, then still in his possession, and continue his journey to meet the Mamluk challenge.

Peter had succeeded in recruiting an army composed mostly of Italian mercenaries, adventurers and vassals of the royal court of Cyprus. His Italian and Cypriot ships had assembled in Rhodes prepared to set sail for Alexandria. The plan was to attack and capture the Egyptian port of Alexandria in order to compel the Mamluks to exchange Jerusalem for the captured port. Philippe de Mézières recorded:

> The fleet was ready to depart. The papal legate, Peter Thomas, accompanied by all the army's ecclesiastical figures, boarded the king's galley on 4 October 1365 to pronounce a general blessing on the army of God . . . King Peter of Cyprus and the whole army made their responses to the legate in an extremely pious fashion. When the benediction was over, on the king's galley there was suddenly raised on high the royal standard — a great red lion. All the army's trumpets sounded on an instant and numberless standards were lifted upon the air as the crusaders shouted with one terrible voice, giving thanks to God and saying: Long live Peter, long live our king of Jerusalem and Cyprus! Death to the Saracen infidels! As always, I, Philip of Mézières, accompanied him in all these things.

Peter's plan to capture the Egyptian port of Alexandria in order to force the Mamluks into exchanging it for the holy city of Jerusalem turned out to be a

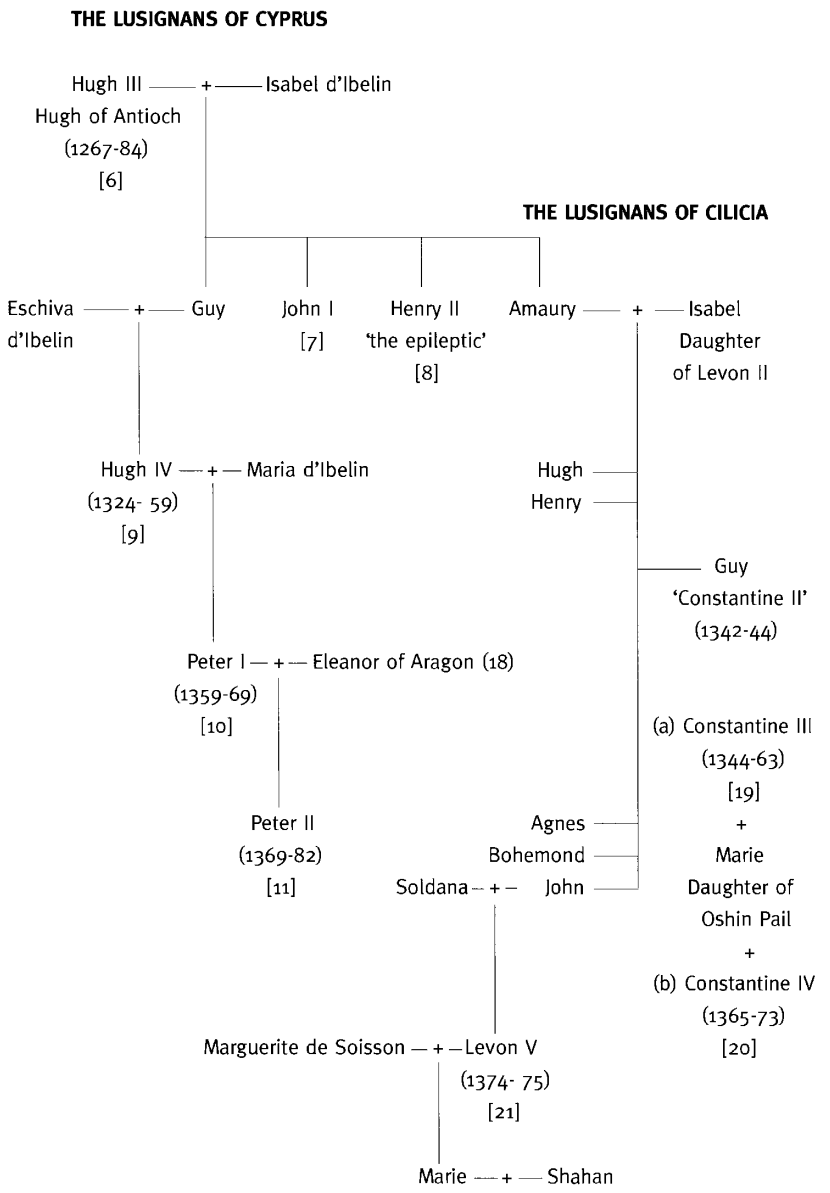
failure. His attack on Alexandria came first as a surprise to the ill-prepared Mamluks who put up little resistance and fled. But Peter was able to hold the city for only six days. In the face of the hordes of reassembled Mamluk forces making ready to launch a counter-offensive to retake their city, Peter's mostly mercenary fighting men chose to abandon Alexandria and sailed away.

Peter was unable to persuade them to stay. Inclement weather battered Peter's galleys as they sailed northwards along the coast of Syria towards Latakia. They were forced temporarily to take shelter on the Cilician coast and then proceeded towards the port of Ayas after receiving a plea for help from the Cilician monarch Constantine IV, who was besieged by the Mamluks. Constantine, fearful for his life and seeing Peter as the sovereign who might have occupied the throne of Cilicia instead of him, was willing to renounce his kingdom and offer it to Peter in exchange for a safe haven in Cyprus. He therefore promised to co-ordinate his counter-attack from positions on the coast with that of the approaching galleys led by Peter in a bid to break the Mamluks' siege of the port, which was now cut off from all commercial and political communications with Cyprus. The port of Ayas was fortified with two fortresses — one on land protecting the harbour and the other, the castle of Korikos, was built off-shore on an island in 1282. The island fortress was swiftly taken by Peter's forces but his attempt to lift the siege on the citadel overlooking the harbour was met with fierce resistance from the Mamluk forces stationed in the bay. Peter, having extended his expedition to Ayas only at the urgent appeal of Constantine, withdrew his fleet when he was unable to confirm that he was assisted by Constantine's forces from positions on land. His hopes for the throne of Cilicia were dashed once again.

Meanwhile, the nobility in Cyprus was growing restless with Peter's capricious obsession with fighting. The king's objectives had long become sterile in the minds of his contemporaries at home and abroad. On 17 January 1369 Peter I, whilst asleep, was stabbed to death. He was survived by his 15-year-old son Peter and two brothers, John of Antioch, the constable of Cyprus, and James, the constable of Jerusalem (later King James I of Jerusalem). John became the regent until his young nephew was crowned King Peter II. But when Peter II died without heir on 3 October 1382, King Levon V, who was ransomed from his imprisonment in Cairo only four days later on 7 October, seriously considered contesting for his former fief in Cyprus and, as the grandson of Amaury de Lusignan, for the crown of the island. Levon's ambitions, however, were only a figment of his imagination. Peter's younger uncle James summarily ascended the throne of Cyprus as King James I, and, when Levon died in 1393, James I also took the crown of Armenia. He then included the arms of Armenia in the Lusignan royal coat and called himself 'the 17th King of Jerusalem, and King of Cyprus and Armenia.'

Descendants of the Lusignans of Cyprus who ruled Cilician Armenia from 1342-75

(numbers designate order of ascension to rule in brackets for Cyprus and parentheses for Cilicia)



Chapter 7

Etchmiadzin

End of a kingdom

Demise of the kingdom: what went wrong?

After the fall of Acre in 1291, the Mamluks had now firmly set the stage for the counter-crusades that they were soon to undertake with great precision and with much strategic forethought. As we have seen, Cilicia was their initial primary target. But Cyprus and Rhodes were not far behind on the Mamluk agenda, which in the main was focused on driving the Christian intruders out of the eastern Mediterranean. Still more painfully, Constantinople, the city of Emperor Constantine the Great and the pride of the Byzantine Empire, was to fall to the Turkish forces of Sultan Mehmed II in 1453 and become the shining star of the Ottoman Empire.

The rise of the Ottoman power in the 15th century opened a new chapter in the already strained Armeno-Turkic relations, but it is beyond the scope of the present work to deal with the Anatolian history that followed. Instead, we must search for intrinsic reasons for the demise of the Cilician kingdom whilst being aware that it is not altogether wrong to suggest that there was no overwhelming single reason. The multiplicity of events described throughout this study have clearly identified the land of Cilician Armenia a battleground in which the stars of many kings and commanders had risen and then disappeared. Its people have been through the 'fires of persecution as few nations have,'[1] yet they marched forward with an unmatched tenacity carrying with them their banner of Christ, their dreams of a brighter tomorrow, their roots of a stubborn heritage and a determination to long endure. But their kingdom did not long endure.

Was there a compelling fundamental flaw in the founding principles of the Armenian kingdom? And if so, why did it prevail through three centuries of history and become the root cause of the kingdom's demise? For answers to these questions we must turn our attention to the history of the Armenian Church.

From the early centuries of Christianity to the present day, the Armenian Church has consistently played a central role in the history of the Armenians as it did in that brief moment in time when this sturdy race of highlanders single-handedly did battle against the most formidable Islamic hordes crisscrossing the land of Cilicia. The role of the Armenian Church was not

insignificant in the secular and political affairs of the people it represented during the nationhood of Cilician Armenia. As will become clear in the following pages, the conflicts of the Armenian Church with its counterpart in the West from the time of its very founding in the first year of the fourth century, and the divisions within its own ranks regarding doctrinal issues, cannot be unambiguously separated from the political events that shaped the history of the old kingdoms in Greater Armenia nor from the more recent kingdom in Cilicia.

The history of the Armenian Church (an oriental Church) is inseparable from the history of the Armenian people. This Church, as a religious institution, is not a missionary Church and neither does it evangelise but welcomes all who seek the Christ of Christianity. It is ultra-conservative and dogmatic, both a contradiction in term because it is also tolerant to the highest degree. But let us not be distracted by the enigmas of this Church; they are not the intended topics of our present discourse. We must turn our attention to the principal issues underlying the eminent role this Church played in the propagation of the Cilician kingdom as well as in its eventual dissolution. But we must preface the beginning of our discourse with the one and essential thesis of this oriental Church upon which it has repeatedly taken a stance throughout the history of Christendom:

> She believes that no Church, however great in herself, represents the whole of Christendom; that each one taken singly, can be mistaken, and to the Universal Church alone belongs the privilege of infallibility in her dogmatic decisions. But if it is incumbent that dogmas remain intact, because they are, as it were, the threads which connect the present with the original beginnings; on the other hand, the Church's advance in doctrine can in no way be hindered.[2]

Origins of the faith

The Armenian Church claims a direct apostolic descent from the missions of St Thaddeus and St Bartholomew, both of whom preached in the land of Greater Armenia during the first half of the first century and suffered martyrdom there. Although the conversion of King Tirdat III to Christianity and his declaration of the new religion as the official national faith of his people did not occur until 301, the missions of the two apostles during the first century of the Christian era had undoubtedly sown the seeds of Christian elements in the region. This is evident from the records of religious persecutions which took place in Armenia during the reigns of Kings Artashes (Artaxerxes) in the year 110, Khosrov (Chosroes) in 230 and Tirdat in 287. Furthermore, Quintus Tertullianus (160-220), the Carthaginian theologian and one of the fathers of the Latin Church, recorded the presence of Armenians in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, a substantial inference of early Christianity in Armenia.

In the same vein, Eusebius of Caesarea (264-340), the Palestinian theologian and bishop of Caesarea (313), quoted in his writings a letter written in 254 by the patriarch Dionysius of Alexandria addressed to Meruzhan (Mitrozanes) ' bishop' of Armenia. Although using the title of bishop in this letter may not have necessarily inferred recognition of an official hierarchal position, as later founded by St Grigor, it nonetheless was a clear indication that early Church administrative structure existed in Greater Armenia several decades before Christianity was declared its official national faith.

The credit for the conversion of King Tirdat is given to St Grigor Partev (Gregory the Parthian), who is affectionately referred to by all Armenians as Grigor Lusavoritch (the Illuminator). Grigor was baptised, reared and educated at Caesarea, in Cappadocia, his refuge from the scimitars of the assassins of his own father Anak. Anak, a descendant of the Parthian house of Arsacides, was assassinated for his participation in the murder of King Chosroes II whose loyal troops took his son Tirdat (III) to Rome for protection. Eventually, Emperor Diocletian (245-313), restored the crown of Armenia to Tirdat, who on his return journey to Vagharshapat — his father's capital in Armenia, met Grigor in Caesarea and employed him as his private assistant. But when Tirdat discovered that Grigor was the son of Anak, the king immediately ordered the imprisonment of Grigor, who remained incarcerated for ten years until he was released as a result of a legendary providential interjection. He preached the true faith to the Armenians and baptised King Tirdat, who, in recognition of his newly acquired faith, erected an impressive cathedral in Vagharshapat at a site revealed to Grigor in a vision. The holy edifice was named Etchmiadzin 'where the only-begotten descended.'

St Grigor was chosen as head of the newly founded Armenian Church and received episcopal consecration in 302 from Leontius, the archbishop of Caesarea.[3] The Armenian Church described the choosing of Leontius for the consecration as a sentimental gesture on the part St Grigor, who had received his theological education at Caesarea. The Church also maintained that the See of Armenia is apostolic and, as such, autonomous from the archbishopric of Caesarea. Therefore, the existence of hierarchal dependence or subordination to the archbishopric of Caesarea is not inferred by Leontius's consecration of St Grigor. Although the innocence of this argument is evident from the history of the early Christian Church, it nevertheless became the root cause of the immense doctrinal conflicts which surfaced nearly two centuries later.

The Byzantine Church insisted on the position that the Armenian Church was suffragan to the archbishopric of Caesarea. The Roman Church, on the other hand, claimed that the Armenian Church, though originally suffragan to Caesarea, was subsequently made an autocephalic (self-governing) institution by Pope Sylvester I (314-35). However, it is presumed that the evidence for

this latter contention was fabricated by the pro-Rome Armenians of Cilicia to appease Rome during the Middle Ages — a time when Roman help was desperately needed in Cilicia to fight the Seljuk and Mamluk hordes who were wreaking havoc in all of northern Syria and Anatolia. Despite these polemics, however, history provides another example of a bishopric consecration which might be construed as a hierarchal subordination, but mistakenly. A case in point was the consecration of Grigoris by St Grigor (his grandson) as the bishop of the newly converted Albanians:

> After his death the Albanians asked for the young Grigoris to be their catholicos, for our king Urnayr had asked St Gregory to consecrate him bishop of his country — not by necessity or because the Armenians are senior to the Albanians; they decided to submit voluntarily, summoned the worthy heir of St Gregory, and were well pleased.[4]

Grigor's leadership of the Armenian Church lasted for nearly a quarter of a century during which he founded its hereditary hierarchal organization (the episcopacy), liturgical order and its canons and homilies. The episcopacy was instituted particularly to safeguard the Church's dynastic continuity in the positions of bishops and archbishops. Given his training in Caesarea, it is natural that he used the liturgy of Caesarea as a paradigm for the newly evolving Armenian liturgy, but he also relied considerably on native Armenian customs and their deeply rooted pagan rites in his attempt to create a unique Armenian worship that reflected a distinctive Armenian character.

In the early fourth century, the Armenians still lacked their own written language and so Grigor acquired scholastic instructions in Greek and Syriac from Caesarea and Edessa for the education of his early clergy. Therefore, in his lifetime, the enactment of the holy services required the concurrent oral translation of the prayers and scriptural readings to spoken Armenian for the benefit of the congregation. Grigor died in 325 and was succeeded by his sons Aristakes (325-33) and Vertanes (333-41). Vertanes was succeeded by his son Housik (341-47) whose two sons refused to follow family tradition and chose secular lives. Therefore, Paren (348-52) was elected to succeed Housik. However, Housik's grandson Nerses (353-73), later known as Nerses the Great, re-established the hereditary tradition and restored the patriarchate to the house of Grigor. Before his death, Grigor played a major role in the conversion of the Georgians and the Caucasian Albanians to Christianity:

> And he accepted the dignity of patriarch and went and converted the lands of the Georgians and Albanians. Arriving in the province of Haband, he taught them to keep the commandments of the Son of God. He laid the foundations of a church in the comopolis of Amaras and appointed workmen and foremen to build a church there.[5]

The region of Greater Armenia during the reign of Emperor Theodosius I in the late fourth century AD was divided between its Byzantine conquerors and the neighbouring empire of the Persian king Chosroes. King Arshak reigned over Greek Armenia, but under the aegis of the Byzantine Emperor, whilst its counterpart remained under the dominant rule of Chosroes, whose territory also contained the Holy See of the Armenian Church at Etchmiadzin.

After a series of successive patriarchs — Schahak I (373-77), Zaven I (377-81) and Aspurakes I (381-86), all of Manzikert from the priestly house of Albianus — St Sahak, son of Nerses the Great, at the behest of king Chosroes was elevated in 387 to the throne of the patriarchate but he was eventually deposed by the now Persian king Vehmihershapu against accusations of treachery and exiled to Persia proper in 428. Sahak, exonerated from all charges of treachery, eventually returned triumphantly to Armenia in 432. However, a year before his return to resume his patriarchal authority, the Ecumenical Council of Ephesus had convened (in 431) and condemned the heresy of Nestorius. This is further discussed below as a component of the Christian thought that prevailed during the troubled closing decades of the fourth century. But in 432, as far as Sahak was concerned, he was quick to notice that the admissible 'Three Chapters' — which constituted the foundations of the Nestorian polemics — within the Ephesian decrees written by Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoret of Cyrus and Ibas of Edessa had in fact been overlooked and escaped the scrutiny of the council in its haste to condemn the heresy of Nestorius. Sahak thus saw fit to intervene and criticise the doctrinal errors in the 'Three Chapters'. This critique, which was forwarded to Constantinople, eventually served the basis for the condemnation of the chapters at the Council of Constantinople in 553 under Emperor Justinian.

The closing decades of the fourth century

Before proceeding further with the review of the history of the Armenian Church and the role it played in the political failures of the Cilician kingdom, it is important that we also review the status of the Greek Church in the latter part of the fourth century — a Church which in the centuries to come would have profound effects on the development of the Armenian Church.

The early Church (in the fourth century) was administered throughout Christendom from the Sees of Rome, Alexandria and Antioch, and, for the most part, these were united doctrinally with the common faith of their respective Church Fathers securely anchored in the unifying dogmas formulated by the Ecumenical Councils of Nicaea in 325 and Constantinople in 381. But the See of Constantinople which had been newly established in 381 was vested with sufficient ecclesiastical powers to make it potentially the dominant See outside of Rome. This, not unexpectedly, met with resistance from the See of Alexandria and, with the latter's condemnation of Flavian —

the patriarch of Constantinople — in 449, a joint effort between Rome and Constantinople to subdue the See of Alexandria took form in the Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon in 451.

The Christology of the Greek Church during this latter part of the fourth century had been shaped by influences from two polemical centres each attempting to offer a universally acceptable Christian doctrine with reference to the human and the divine scriptural dogmas concerning Jesus the Man and Christ the Redeemer. The first of the two, known as the Antiochene school, had consistently made a clear distinction between the human and divine natures in Jesus the Man. Its leading proponents were the theologians Diodorus of Tarsus and his disciple Theodore of Mopsuestia. Their so-called 'dyophysite' principle, apropos of the two natures, was carried forward by Nestorius, patriarch of Constantinople, who appended to the principle the formula that the two natures of Jesus in his physical manifestation as the Son of God remained also clearly distinct and separate in the divinity of Christ the Redeemer.

The opposing Alexandrian school, however, insisted on the intimate union (fusion) of the two natures in the divinity of Christ the Redeemer, and spoke of one nature of the Word Incarnate. The chief proponent of this 'monophysite' tenet was St Cyril of Alexandria who insisted on the 'unutterable union of the Godhead and the manhood in Christ the natural Son of God.'[6] During the early polemical warfare between the two opposing schools, Cyril's Christology triumphed at the Council of Ephesus in 431 and Nestorius was condemned as a heretic. However, in 447, Cyril's disciple Eutyches — now a Constantinopolitan abbot — modified the monophysite orthodoxy by over-emphasising the divinity of Christ to an extent that the humanity of Jesus the Man was overshadowed by the overwhelming divinity in Christ. Thus, the divine nature of the Son of God was projected as the principal entity in Christ the Redeemer — the One Nature doctrine. As a result, Eutyches was accused by his diocesan, Bishop Eusebius of Dorylaeum, and by the patriarch Domnus of Antioch, of trying to propagate the doctrine of the One Nature.

But to illustrate the unutterable state of disunion, the massive confusion, the chaos and the confrontational nature in the affairs of this early Church we need only recall that Flavian, unhappy with Eutyches's theology, summoned the Synod of Constantinople in 448 where he pronounced Eutyches's teachings contrary to orthodox doctrine. Consequently, Eutyches was deposed and excommunicated. Eutyches appealed to the emperor Theodosius II (408-50), to Pope Leo I (440-61) and to Dioscorus, who had succeeded Cyril as patriarch of Alexandria. The emperor in council with the patriarch decided to submit the case to a general meeting. The Synod of Ephesus was thus assembled in 449 presided over by Dioscorus himself. As the presiding theologian, Dioscorus succeeded in arranging Eutyches's acquittal and condemned Flavian, Eusebius and Domnus. But the mud slinging was not yet

over within the enigmatic cliques of the hallowed corridors of Rome, Constantinople, and Alexandria. Pope Leo, in sympathy with Constantinople, rehabilitated Flavian at a special synod in Rome in 450, and, taking sides with the latter, condemned Dioscorus. Later that year, Emperor Marcian (450-57), at the insistence of Pope Leo, summoned the bishops to another council, not in Rome as the pope had desired, but at Chalcedon for the Fourth Ecumenical Council, which was held there in 451.

The Armenian Church during this colourful period of Christian history had remained autocephalous yet faithful and abiding to the decisions of the first two Councils. St Aristakes, a disciple of the patriarch Sahak, himself took part in the Nicaean Council and brought back with him the creed it had formulated to be fully embraced by the Armenian Church. Later, this Church was also to accept completely the decisions of the Ecumenical Council of Ephesus held in 431. The Armenians' doctrinal position was more closely aligned with the Church of Alexandria and, in full accord with the Christological premise of 'one nature united in the Incarnate Word', thus firmly in opposition to any theological argument which tended to separate the human and the divine natures in Christ the Redeemer.

During the reign of Patriarch Sahak (387-439), and with his encouragement and support, the Armenian alphabet was developed in 404 through the ingenuity of Mesrop Mashtots, a former secretary of the king and a disciple of Nerses the Great. The immediate consequence of this literary creation was the immediate gathering of the 'Targmanitch' (the translators) to carry out the translation of the Bible in their new Armenian script. The translation of the Old Testament was made from the Greek Septuagint text but also relied heavily on a Syriac version. Twenty nine years in the making, it was finally completed in 433 and approved by Sahak after revisions for consistency with that of the Bible of Constantinople. It was now possible for lay people to read the scriptures in their own native tongue (and not the exclusive privilege of the educated clergy) and thus appreciate fully the spiritual teachings of their Christian faith. It is this newly acquired national pride that became the cornerstone of the Armenians' sense of identity and self- determination and which has sustained their faith in Christianity at one with their Church ever since the fifth century. The classical example of this all-encompassing, all-consuming dedication to a uniform spiritual maxim was the scenario of the battle of Avarayr fought in the same year that the Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon was convened (451).

When the Persian King Yazdagird II wanted to impose Mazdaism (Zoroastrianism) upon the Armenians in his domain, they refused to yield and chose to take up arms in defence of their religious liberty. They appealed for help from Emperor Marcian who paid no heed to the Armenian predicament. The overwhelmed Armenians were defeated soundly and predictably, but their military ruin was transformed into a moral triumph that has nurtured and preserved the Armenians' freedom of worship for nearly 16 centuries.

Nevertheless, this armed conflict was the reason why delegates of the Armenian Church could not be present at the Council of Chalcedon. In essence the Armenian Church was prevented from participating in this ecumenical council for reasons that should have been obvious to the council and accepted as unavoidable if the Armenian Christian faith was to be saved from oblivion. Instead, the encumbered absence of the Armenian delegates from Chalcedon, and thus their inability in the early centuries to resolve their doctrinal disagreements, became the root cause of divisive ecclesiastical intolerance and political conflicts that resonated for centuries between the Greek and Armenian Churches.

The Council of Chalcedon – 451 AD

This council was convened at the behest of Emperor Marcian, perhaps to a large extent to implement the Christology of Constantinople as the dominant theology of Christendom. The council accepted the definition put forward by Pope Leo in his letter to Flavian, which compromised between the two extreme positions by declaring that Christ had two natures, each perfect in itself and each distinct from the other, yet perfectly united in one person, who was at once both God and man. Thus, the creed which emanated from the Council of Chalcedon re-interpreted the Nicaean creed on the unity of the two natures of Christ, and concluded that the two natures of Jesus are in no way nullified on account of their union in Christ, and that the unique property of each nature remained intact and in harmony with the other in Christ. The eastern bishops (Armenian, Syrian, Georgian and Coptic) — who adhered to the Alexandrian Christology — beleaguered and harassed on this issue by the See of Constantinople stood together unshakeably and rejected this new creed on the grounds that it differed from the original Cyrillian definition of 'one nature united in the Incarnate Word'.

They unanimously proclaimed in protest that the Nestorian heresy had been re-established at Chalcedon. Furthermore, the See of Rome, apprehensive of Constantinople, did not fully support the council and made a distinction between the canons admissible from those inadmissible by Rome. The council, in spite of the dissent of the Roman legates, asserted that since a special pre-eminence had been given to the bishopric of old Rome, as the old seat of the imperial government, so an equal pre-eminence should be accorded to the bishopric of Constantinople as the new seat of this government. This was never accepted by the Roman Church though it accepted the doctrinal definitions of the council. It was, and still remains, the basis of the claim of the Eastern Orthodox Church for complete independence from Rome and equality with it.

The definition of the Christian doctrine at Chalcedon, however, by no means ended the controversy. Emperor Zeno (474-75, 476-91) in the first year of his reign, on the advice of Bishop Acacius of Constantinople, issued

the so-called *Henotikon* which renounced the Council of Chalcedon and re-instated the tenets of the Council of Ephesus, a position also taken by the interim emperor Basiliscus (475-76). In essence Pope Leo's earlier position taken in support of Constantinople for rehabilitating Flavian, whilst condemning the Alexandrian monophysite Dioscorus, had embarrassed Rome. An angry correspondence followed between Rome and Constantinople, which ended by Pope Felix III (483-92) excommunicating Acacius. Moreover, this divisive outcome of the council, instead of the optimistic results expected at the outset, prompted the Nestorians to hail the council's upholding of the dyophysite principle as their victory and began to increase their activities along their common borders with Armenia. The Nestorians were considered a heretical religious group on the southern borders of Armenia which, under the aegis of Persian Mazdaism, had successfully founded an important theological school at Nisibis. They relentlessly attempted in vain to introduce the teachings of Nestorianism into Armenia during the second half of the fifth century.

For four decades the Armenian Church struggled with the religious aggressions of its neighbouring Nestorians whilst remaining detached from the quarrels in Constantinople. During this period Armenia was in a state of confusion: most of its church leaders were either in prison or in exile, and much of the time its people were terrorised into submission. Religious persecution was rampant. The outcome of the Council of Chalcedon seemed scarcely an Armenian concern during those four dark decades. The Armenian Church had remained scrupulously faithful to the doctrines of the first three councils and to the uncompromising principles of Sahak's anti-Nestorian stance. But when the troubled Syrian Church consulted the Armenian Church in 490 for guidance on the matter of the Chalcedon doctrine, a synod was summoned by Patriarch Papken I (490-516) to review the new Chalcedonian creed.

Thus the First Ecclesiastical Synod attended by the eastern bishops was held in the city of Dvin in 506. The Armenian Church had always consistently adhered to the 'one united nature' creed whilst acknowledging the separate humanity and divinity of Jesus the Man. In Dvin it reaffirmed its adherence to the Nicaean doctrine and asserted that the Armenian creed would remain faithful to that of the Ephesian Council. Therefore, to speak of two natures in Christ the Redeemer, as did the Chalcedonians, was to revert to the Nestorian heresy. Thus, the Armenian Church condemned the doctrine of Christ's dual nature defined by the Chalcedon Council, and taking heart from the firm decisions of Emperors Zeno and Basiliscus supporting the Ephesian creed, it voted to reject the Chalcedonian creed. With this decision the unity in faith and doctrine, which had been the distinctive feature of Christendom in the fourth and the fifth centuries, came to a sad close.

The Armenian vote was perhaps understandable. Their constant struggle with Nestorianism, which was operating aggressively along their southern

borders, had produced a strong negativism in the attitude of the Armenian Church against the Nestorians and feared that the Chalcedonian creed was too closely aligned with Nestorianism and thus heretical. Furthermore, the Armenian Church saw the Council of Chalcedon not as a truly religiously motivated ecclesiastical gathering seeking divine inspiration for resolving doctrinal disputes, but rather a politically prompted exercise in power-play between the patriarchates of Rome and Constantinople that held little interest to the Armenians. So, the Church elected not to corrupt the 'Armenian faith'. The final nail in the coffin of compromise came in 551 when the Armenian patriarch Nerses II, at the Second Ecclesiastical Synod held in Dvin, emphatically reaffirmed the tenets of Ephesus as the uncompromising doctrine of the Armenian faith against all Nestorian and Chalcedonian dogmas, and decreed all relations should be broken with the Byzantine Church and its See of Constantinople.

This action without doubt was a major contributing factor in preserving the strong ethnic identity shared by all Armenians, and the unique individuality of the Armenian Church. Together they became the most dominant source of Armenian national unity and the guardian of the Armenian heritage, language and secular traditions in times of war or peace. These unchanging attributes of the Armenian ethnicity were aptly expressed in Constantinople in 1910 in the words of Bertrand Bareilles in his preface to the French edition of M. Ormanian's *The Church of Armenia*: 'I have often had a very clear impression that even when he loses his faith the Armenian never ceases to continue loyal to his Church. He instinctively feels that if it becomes undermined, all will crumble.'[7]

Roots of discontent

It is inevitable that one draws the conclusion that the historical antagonism between the Armenian Church and the Church of the Eastern Empire in the Middle Ages parallels the Christological disputes of the early centuries of Christianity. The Armenian Church has always maintained as lawful the decrees of the first three ecumenical councils — Nicaea (325), Constantinople (381) and Ephesus (431). These three councils were equally recognised by both the Western and the Eastern Churchs and thus formed the common thread that unified Christendom under one creed until 551 AD.

The Armenian Church disputed and rejected the views of the succeeding four councils, which were partly agreed on by both Rome and Constantinople. It also rejected 13 other decrees which were proposed and accepted by Rome alone. It seemed that Rome used these councils to create deliberate religious and political splits for the purpose of maintaining its own See separate from everyone else. However, it is not essential to delve into the heart of these later theological disputes as they were now marginal to the concerns of the Armenian Church. In rejecting the Chalcedon decrees, in

Byzantium's eyes the Armenian Church had effectively seceded from the See of Constantinople and become a non-Chalcedonian orthodoxy. And when it began to consecrate its patriarchs by the bishops of Armenia instead of by the archbishop of Casearea, Byzantium categorically viewed this new Armenian expression of religious liberty as tantamount to schism. To place the Armenian Church in the hierarchical dependency of the Byzantine Church, it was imperative for Byzantium to insist that the mere consecration of Grigor Lusavoritch by Leontius in 302 rendered the Armenian Church unambiguously suffragan to the bishopric of Caesarea and so must abide by the tenets of Chalcedon. Byzantium, thus, found itself blindly committed to viewing all arguments in opposition to that claim as incorrect and unacceptable.

At intervals throughout history, the land of Greater Armenia found itself repeatedly conquered or partitioned into spheres of influence, its princes supported and patronized in turn, and its territories temporarily annexed by rival powers. Chief among these rival contenders were the Romans, Persians, Greeks and Arabs. The Persians, from 428 to 633, played a significant part in moulding the character of the early Christian history of Armenia. The Byzantine domination then followed the Persians and lasted until 693. Subsequently, the Golden Age of Islamic conquests and expansionism brought the Arabs to Armenia in 693 and they remained the dominant power until 862. The impositions placed on the Armenian populace by these foreign powers had taught the Armenians over the centuries the delicate art of appeasing their rulers yet, ironically, securing for themselves a significant latitude in religious freedom and the exercise of moral dignity.

Thus, in the battle of Avarayr we witness the triumph of Armenian determination to oppose the political subjugation and social oppression inflicted upon them by their Persian overlords, who consequently allowed the Armenians to conduct their affairs without further interference. The Byzantines, on the other hand, believing themselves to be the bearers of Christian light to the East — a self-appointed assignment one might add — exercised their rule over the Armenians with tenacity; a rule which was biased by Byzantium's obsession with matters of Chalcedonian dogmas. The Armenians, in response, stood steadfastly holding the tenets of Ephesus as their uncompromising faith upon which were founded their religious doctrines. Yet they were careful enough not to rouse Byzantine intolerance or seek the protection of the enemies of Byzantium. They respected the sacred Christian brotherhood that underpinned their collective commitment for the good of their Christian faith.

Arab rule of Greater Armenia in the late seventh century was no less melodramatic than the previous periods under Persian and Greek rules. The patriarchs of the Armenian Church were the natural ambassadors of people to the courts of the ruling caliphs. They spoke with authority as representatives of the Armenian royal courts. They held sway over their monarchs as partners

in the conduct of the feudal affairs and in the management of wealth and property. Often, after the death of a king, or in his absence, the patriarch served as regent and was in charge of the state treasury until a new king was crowned. Hence, with these vested prerogatives, the patriarchs sought from the caliphs special socio-religious privileges and concessions, which were often granted without preconditions. Though the Armenians were often promised wealth and power in exchange for renouncing their faith, these Arab offers were undoubtedly made to malign the opposing might of their arch-enemy in Constantinople. But, they failed to tempt the keen analytical minds of the Armenian ecclesiastical Fathers, who through thick and thin preferred to retain their Christian solidarity with their Byzantine counterparts. Furthermore, the Armenian Church, unlike the Latin and Syrian Churches, enjoyed a peaceful coexistence with the Muslim rulers but only because it acquiesced on behalf of its people to the financial demands put upon them. To help meet these demands, the Armenians were permitted to become vassals of their Arab rulers with wide-ranging administrative autonomy to levy and raise new taxes. Massacres followed when the demands were not met.

In effect, the Armenians had learned not to take sides but to develop and fine tune their acquired skill of appeasing the opposition, a talent that would serve them well through centuries of conflict that were yet to come. Whilst the Armenians became closely involved with the crusaders, they did not follow the Latins in their fanatical hatred of Islam. As a result, the Jerusalem Armenians remained a protected community immune to most of the atrocities committed reciprocally between the conquering Latins and Muslims. The benefits of this calculated neutrality, either in the face of religious difficulties or on the heels of political repression, continued to benefit the Armenians even as late as the mid 15th century. When the sultan of Egypt al-Zahir Jaqmaq (1438-53) forbade the Latins to rebuild their churches in Jerusalem, he at the same time issued a special edict that forbade the emir of Jerusalem Abu al-Kheir ibn al-Nahhas from harassing the Armenians with unnecessary taxation.[8] A testimonial inscription to this effect appears at the main entrance to the Armenian Quarter in the Old City of Jerusalem (plates 30&31).

The declarations of Nerses II at the Second Synod of Dvin in 551 set in motion an unceasing movement on the part of Byzantium to bring the schismatic Armenian Church under the dominance of Constantinople. Throughout their long and determined manoeuvring from the mid sixth to the late ninth centuries, the Byzantines employed every means at their disposal to achieve their desperate mission, which in the end failed to materialise. These means came in different forms and at different times either as 'big stick' diplomacy, as polemical persuasion, as political intimidation or even as social persecution and forced mass dislocations. There was always the promise to improve the adversarial Armenian political relations with the empire if the Armenian Church was willing to review its position on the Chalcedon issue. This was Byzantium's obsession; it compelled them to

exploit every opportunity and every circumstance. And, indeed, there were many.

During one episodic interval in history when Armenia was partitioned between Byzantium and Persia in the late sixth century, Byzantium hastened to install, in that portion where it ruled, its own Armenian anti-patriarch in the person of Hovhannes of Bagaran. He was to serve the Byzantine ecclesiastical cause and interfere with the authority of the Armenian patriarch Movses II (574-604) regarding his anti-Nestorianism. However, the anti-patriarch's mission was unexpectedly ended by his untimely demise at the hands of the Persians, much to the chagrin of his masters who remained reluctant to appoint a successor.

The Byzantines then turned their attention towards the Georgians who, until the closing years of the sixth century, had firmly remained in the Armenian ecclesiastical sphere of influence. The belief that by enlisting the Georgians to the Greek cause they could also ultimately win over the Armenians gave Byzantium the underlying impetus to focus their attention on the Georgian patriarch Kurion. On this occasion they succeeded, and the Georgian Church early in the seventh century parted from the Armenian fold and embraced Chalcedonian orthodoxy. Not surprisingly, the Georgian decision made little difference to the Armenian resolve and determination to remain non-Chalcedonian. A more direct approach, therefore, was next orchestrated from the See of Constantinople.

The Armenians were enjoying a period of administrative autonomy as vassals of Arab rule in Greater Armenia during the latter half of the ninth century. Patriarch Photius of Constantinople, aware of the relative political peace in Armenia, ventured to take advantage of the peaceful circumstances. He appealed to the Armenian See in Dvin to reverse its decision on Chalcedon and to reconcile its differences with Constantinople. His letters to this effect, were sent to Patriarch Zakaria I of Dzak (855-77) and to the king Ashot Bagratuni. In response, a council was convened at Shirakavan, one of the king's residences, to consider the appeal. The king backed the patriarch and this merely secured Armenian re-affirmation of the declarations of 551.

However, the most astute of Byzantine efforts in resolving its obsession with the Armenian Church decades before the Georgian Church accepted the Chalcedon tenets was the conviction of Emperor Heraclius (610-41) that he had the solution to disarm the opposition of the non-Chalcedonian Churches to the declarations of the Chalcedon council. He was very conscious of the effect of the religious dissensions which were weakening the power of his empire, and so, in 623, the emperor put his plan into action determined to succeed in bringing about the union of the Churches. During the Justinian dynasty, Emperor Maurice (582-602) had regained much of the land of Armenia occupied by the Persians, but a part of that gain was lost again to Persia by Emperor Phocas (602-10). And now Heraclius, of Armenian descent and who had fought alongside his Armenian contingents in the imperial army

to victoriously reconquer the Armenian lands held by Persia, was ready with the help of the patriarch Segius of Constantinople to address the doctrinal rift. Heraclius visited Armenia and conducted negotiations in Erzurum with the reigning patriarch Yezr I (630-41) with results that the emperor found very promising. Accepting Justinian's deletion of the 'Three Chapters' from the decrees of Chalcedon, Heraclius also took the position that in Christ there was only one energy and one will, for which the term 'monothelitism' was framed, and in 626, issued an edict forbidding any mention of 'two energies' in Christ.

An agreement was reached in 632 and seemed to hold some promise as even Pope Honorius I (625-38) appeared to support the new initiative and adopt it in his papal edict. However, as is always the case, disputes on issues of faith are never easily resolved. The Byzantine patriarch Sophronius of Jerusalem opposed the new compromise and declared with inflexible logic that a belief in two energies and two wills in Christ was essential for the Byzantine Orthodox faith as demanded by the tenets of Chalcedon. The Armenians in turn, at their synod which convened in Dvin in 645 cancelled the agreement reached by Yezr and rejected without qualification all interpretations of Christian dogmas that had come after the Council of Ephesus.

Even though in the years to come Heraclius's successor Emperor Constans II (641-68) strived to maintain some element of order in the raging controversy, the monothelite formula, which had been so intelligently fabricated to save the Byzantine position in the East and to generate an atmosphere of peace and conciliation, only succeeded in rousing the Church of Rome to fresh activity which in 649, at the Lateran Synod of Western bishops presided over by Pope Martin I (649-53), defined the doctrine of the two wills in unambiguous terms and condemned the monothelite formula. This was an outrageous definace of the imperial authority which could not be tolerated. At the emperor's command, Martin was arrested and sent as a prisoner to Constantinople, and ultimately died in exile in September 655.

With the accession of the emperor Constantine Pogonatus in 668, the controversy was once more revived and assumed such dimensions that the emperor decided to submit the matter to a general council, to be held at Constantinople in 680. During the year before this council met, a synod was assembled in Rome by Pope Agatho (678-81) which decided not to alter the decisions of the Lateran synod of 649. Instead the pope offered a likely solution to the dispute. 'The will,' he said, 'is the property of the nature, so that, as there are two natures, so there are two wills; but the human will ever determines itself in harmony with the divine will.' But all this overzealously expended energy at harmonising the Christain faith turned out to be an exercise in the futility of toying with providence — Arab conquests had brought Muslim rule to the borders of Armenia. In time, Sempat Bagratuni and the patriarch Nerses III would surrender to the invading infidels and face the wrath of Emperor Constantine IV (668-85) for not honouring Yezr's

agreement with Emperor Heraclius. They had indeed reached the point of no return.

There remained only a farewell, 'but that farewell was now extended to the Churches of all those territories which after centuries of religious disaffection were finally lost to the Empire.'[9]

Conflict between East & West

Until the early seventh century virtually all of the Eastern Churches within the Orthodox family were autocephalous and self-governing. But the religious schism of 1054 between Rome and the Chalcedonian East was, to a large degree, a quarrel between the Sees of Rome and Constantinople that perhaps can be traced back to the moment Constantinople replaced Rome as the capital of the Christianised Roman Empire. Although it was apparent to the Byzantines that the historical significance and legitimacy of their capital was intimately dependent on the Roman secular heritage, their focus on the use of the Greek language rather than Latin, especially in matters of the Orthodox doctrines, was a significant element in the disharmony that was to follow. This disparity in the use of a common ecclesiastical language led to divergences in doctrinal understandings and interpretations. As a natural consequence of this, the conceptual development of theology as a discipline diverged between the theologians of the East and their counterparts in the West.

In Constantinople, classical Greek logic and philosophical thought were applied in Greek to theological definitions that were to become rigid doctrinal cornerstones. Basil the Great of Caesarea (329-79), one of the great Greek Fathers, and Emperor Athanasius I (491-518) both made considerable use of the philosophy of reason as a rational tool to refute heresies and expose theological weaknesses as perceived by Byzantium that were often at odds with the Latin perceptions of the same issues. Synergism, a mainstream Roman philosophy, had no place in Greek thought. Much of the Photian disputes of the ninth century with Pope John VIII (872-82)[10] was a result of misunderstandings and mistranslations of theological formulae often initially constructed in Greek in Constantinople.[11] Also, there was the more mundane that further illustrates the point. Pope Nicholas I (858-67) felt insulted when he was addressed by the Greeks as Bishop of Old Rome, though that was the honoured Byzantine reference to the pope's office.[12]

But the most serious antagonism between Rome and Constantinople arose when the Greeks objected to the inclusion of the word *filioque* 'and the Son' in the Nicene Creed with its implications on the nature of the Holy Trinity. It became by far the most intractable of the theologically divisive elements and drove a wedge of enmity between the theologians of Rome and Constantinople. The original Christian Creed which was formulated at the Council of Nicaea in 325 and later revised at the Council of Constantinople in 381 read:

> I believe . . . And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, *proceeding from the Father*. Who together, with the Father and the Son, is adored and glorified.

This creed was accepted by both the Western and Eastern Churches without confusion until in the sixth or seventh century the Church of Spain added the *filioque* to the creed so that it now read:

> I believe . . . And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, *proceeding from the Father and the Son*. Who together, with the Father and the Son, is adored and glorified.

This modified creed was not initially accepted by all the Western Church. Although Rome had always maintained that the Trinity was a single interchangeable union of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, it nevertheless abided by the original Nicene creed. Ironically, Popes Leo III (795-816) and John VIII (872-82) both believed that though there was no obvious theological objection to the use of the *filioque*, it would be a mistake to depart from the universally accepted version of the creed. But the increasing influence of the German emperors on the papal office in the late tenth century gradually brought about the insertion of the *filioque* into the Creed, and, ultimately, in the early 11th century, it was finally officially adopted by the papacy. As for Byzantium, it believed that to tamper with the original Nicene creed was to tamper with the authority of the Church Fathers thereby lapsing into heresy, and it simultaneously interpreted the filioque dispute as a capriciously invasive attempt on the part of Rome at undermining the fundamental precepts of Church government and doctrine.

As a result of the *filioque* dispute, Constantinople sought ways to consolidate its authority in Christendom. This no doubt was also driven by the emperor's political strength. The Apostolic See in Rome alone had (and still has) the sole ecumenical authority to co-ordinate the thoughts, actions and administration of the Latin Church whilst in Constantinople these same responsibilities, as well as the social and public posturing of the Church, were deemed vested in the authority of the Byzantine emperor. This politically driven process in the latter was inherently consistent with the ancient practices in the Near East where society was monarchial in form and in each case the king was conceived as a religious as well as a political figure. The king was the link between the 'divine in heaven' and 'mankind on earth'. The conversion of Emperor Constantine to Christianity in the fourth century 'reaffirmed the role of the king as the image of the logos [God revealed as Jesus] on earth'.

Scepticism in the West, however, about the ecclesiastical role of the emperor lingered quietly, and given the right conflicting circumstances, it always stood a good chance for becoming a bone of contention between pope

and emperor. The early popes did not see themselves as rivals to the emperors as long as the emperors left doctrinal matters to the Roman See. Thus, during the first millennium AD, Rome represented, on the surface at least, Christendom's spiritual and cultural unity without vested political authority as opposed to Constantinople's concept of 'the Byzantine commonwealth of faith in communion with the centre of political power in Constantinople'. Hence, the aim of the See of Constantinople was to consolidate an ecclesiastical empire acquired through a combination of missionary efforts and military gains. With this in mind, in 944, the Byzantine armies took Edessa, and two decades later, Antioch. Georgia and Armenia were already under Byzantine military dominance, and whilst missionary envoys worked in Russia, Poland, Bohemia and Hungary, southern Italy and Sicily became Byzantium's latest territorial acquisitions.

However, by the start of the 11th century, the popes were ready to act out their role as the guardians of the faith and sole centre of pastoral government. As a result, the 11th century brought the greatest reforms in the Roman Church, half a millennium before the Lutheran reformation movement of 1517. The reforms began in eastern France in the regions of Burgundy and Lorraine which, by the inspired intervention of the Holy Roman Emperor Henry III (1017-56), culminated in 1049 with the ascension of the Alsatian bishop Leo IX to the Petrine chair. In the following year Pope Leo produced the first collection of canons which reflected the spirit of his reforms, confident that they were inspired by God for the good of Christendom. He accordingly sent his first papal legate to Byzantium to negotiate with the patriarch of Constantinople, Michael Cerularius.

The schism of 1054

Michael Cerularius was a figure who wielded great power in Constantinople. He insisted on the use of uniform liturgical rituals throughout his patriarchate and targeted the Armenians by calling their sacramental practices distinctly Judaistic. But forbidding the Armenians to practice their rituals would have appeared discriminatory because the Latin Church in Constantinople also practiced similar rituals. But in 1052, when the Normans in southern Italy attempted to prohibit Orthodox rituals in favour of the Latin in areas under their rule, Cerularius took advantage of this situation and retaliated by demanding in turn the use of the Orthodox rituals throughout the Latin churches of Constantinople, and when the Latins refused to conform, Cerularius ordered the closure of their churches.

The legate sent by Pope Leo IX arrived in Constantinople to discipline Cerularius and negotiate with him the new papal canons. The Byzantine emperor Constantine IX Monomachus (1042-55) was more accommodating towards the papal legate than Cerularius as good relations with the papacy were essential if the Normans were ever to be convinced to halt their

aggressive military campaign in those parts of southern Italy where the Greeks still enjoyed political and religious authority. The legate was badly received by Cerularius and reacted violently to a letter that he took to be the pope's words delivered to him by the legate. But there is good reason to believe that the letter had been tampered with. Nonetheless, the situation was exacerbated by the unexpected death of Leo in April 1054 and, on 16 July, his legate entered Hagia Sophia, the cathedral of the Holy Wisdom in Constantinople, and laid upon its altar a bull excommunicating Patriarch Cerularius and all his senior patriarchal clergy.

The bull — authored by Cardinal Humbert of Silva Candida, Chief Papal Secretary; Frederick of Lorraine, Papal Chancellor (later to become Pope Stephen IX); and Peter, Archbishop of Amalfi — was publicly burned by order of the emperor and its authors anathematized by the See of Constantinople. This event highlighted the culmination of centuries of tension between the Latins and Greeks each struggling to achieve its own indisputable theological supremacy and political dominance in all of Christendom. The reality of this truth was crystalised by the fervour of the Crusades which formalised the competition between the Greeks and the Latins for the political control of three out of the four oriental patriarchal Sees; that is, Jerusalem, Antioch, and Constantinople.

Rome & the Armenians

> 'The Latin Church, on account of her remoteness, came first into touch with the Armenian Church at the time of the Crusades. The Armenian Church has always understood the meaning of union in the true and strict sense of the term. She has desired to see its establishment on the basis of a spiritual communion between the Churches, of mutual respect for their several positions, of liberty for each within the limits of her own sphere, and of the spirit of Christian charity overruling all. She has never tolerated that union should take the guise of domination, nor be mistaken for proselytism. Unfortunately, the Greek and Latin Churches, on the strength of their political and social status, have always been disposed to imagine that it was only possible to realise the union of the Churches by bringing them under thraldom. To be more precise in our remarks, we would add that the spirit of domination holds the first place among the Latins, and that proselytism among the Greeks . . . These efforts towards union have no novelty about them. They have been punctiliously maintained towards the Greeks, without any practical result being brought about; and the Armenian Church has stood firm in her independent attitude, even despite the fact that her vassal dynasties have disappeared one after the other under the blows of Tartar invaders. It was due to this circumstance that the Armenians seized the opportunity of emigrating en masse; and that has been the main cause of

> the ruin of the Armenian fatherland. One party, taking the northern route, crossed the Caucasus and the Euxine, and went to settle in Georgia, the Crimea, Poland, Moldavia, Wallachia and Hungary. We must not follow their footsteps. Another party took the southern route, and settled successively in Comagene, in Cilicia, in Syria, and in Caramania, where they succeeded in founding, first a principality, and then an Armenian kingdom.'[13]

The Roman See had little direct contact, if any, with the clergy of the Armenian Church before the middle of the 11th century. The few recorded contacts were those of Armenian pilgrims and include the visit of St Symon (Simeon) the Hermit.[14] However, contacts with the Armenians became more frequent, and in far greater numbers, in late 11th century. The impetus for this was the Armenian heretic Macharus, who had fled Armenia and sought refuge in southern Italy. His heresy was such that in 1080 the Armenian patriarch Grigor II Vkayaser sent his representative, a priest by the name of John, to the court of Pope Gregory VII with the request that Macharus be sought out and excommunicated for his stance against the Armenian Church. The pope obliged the patriarch by delegating this responsibility to the archbishop of Benevento,[15] thus more or less setting in motion a formal dialogue between Rome and Armenia. This relatively minor contact however would not have necessarily left much of an impact on fostering closer ties between the two churches had it not been for the Crusades that began simultaneously in the closing decade of the 11th century.

The spread of Latin influence in Asia Minor accelerated with the arrival of the crusaders, especially, after the founding of their early principalities in Edessa and Antioch. Whenever it was prudent, they replaced the bishops of the Greek Orthodox Church with their Latin equivalents but these ecclesiastical initiatives on behalf of the Roman Church during the early stages of the crusader settlements in Asia Minor were not necessarily for religious domination of the local Christians. On the contrary, the crusaders exercised complete toleration of the Eastern liturgy and, to a large extent, divorced themselves from direct involvement in local religious affairs. The Armenians, in particular, were the first beneficiaries of this pattern of peaceful coexistence with the crusaders. The Armenians ruled independently in their feudal lands which extended from the Taurus Mountains to the cities of Marash, Raban, Kesoun, and Edessa. This state of mutual toleration, however, changed gradually, and by the end of the first generation of crusader settlements, the Armenian feudal holdings were confined mostly to the mountainous areas in north-central Cilicia.

The West's emphasis on religious unity with the Eastern churches of Asia Minor came into focus and occupied pre-eminence in Rome only after Saladin's power in Egypt and Syria in the early 1170s had begun to be consolidated into a formidable force that threatened Latin control of the

Levant. In the first instance, Saladin's aggressive military victories had forced the Maronites of Lebanon to acknowledge papal primacy as a pre-condition of the pope's help for fighting the threat of the infidel. The Maronites thus became the first to form a 'Uniate Church' in the Levant.[16] With the fear of Saladin's power threatening Christian traditions in Syria and Palestine, the Maronite decision, in turn, encouraged the Armenian patriarch Grigor IV to send his bishop to Pope Lucius III (1181-85) with a request for help in exchange for the patriarch's profession of the faith of the Roman Church. This offer was taken by the pope, unfortunately, as an act of submission by the Armenian Church to the primacy of the Roman See.

The contented pope then sent to the Armenian patriarch a pallium and a copy of the *Rituale Romanum* (the Ritual of the Roman Church) which Nerses of Lampron, then archbishop of Tarsus, translated into Armenian. Although it is the case that contact with Rome at an ecumenical level was initiated by the Armenian patriarch, it is also the case that this contact could not have been implemented without the prior consent of young Roupen's court under the care of bailli Thomas, whose primary concern must have been the security of his realm from Saladin's growing might.

Nevertheless, in Rome's view, the Armenian Church had now come into full communion with it despite the wide measure of divergence that existed between the Armenian and Roman perceptions of the union. However, the popes who followed Lucius III to the Petrine throne were in no position to take a hard line with the Armenian Church because Armenian Cilicia was the only Christian state on mainland Asia which had not fallen to Saladin. Armenian help was sorely needed by the West for the safe passage of Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa's army into Syria. The ensuing correspondence of Popes Clement III and Innocent III with Baron Levon II, as we have seen, quickly set the stage for the coronation of Levon as the first Armenian king in Cilicia in exchange for his material help.

King Levon's ecumenical commitment to Rome during his reign, as seen from an Armenian perspective, was nothing more than a political decision accompanied with very little, if any, religious considerations. Although the fall of Constantinople in 1204 immediately freed Levon from Byzantine intervention in his autonomous affairs of state, he at the same time became more exposed to Seljuk aggression. His kingdom needed Western protection. In contrast to the Armenian view however, it is unlikely that Rome's interest in the Armenians was anything other than religious.

Rome's interest was contained in a spiritual and cultural context since the popes saw themselves as the guardians of the faith, its principal teachers and interpreters of Christian dogma. Rome was envisioned as the universal centre of pastoral government. Though Rome influenced political decisions, the government of state and country in the main was left to the discretion of kings and emperors. Rome's chief concern was the preservation of the Holy Mother Church and itself, its appointed 'Supreme Authority'.

The first strains in this relationship surfaced during Levon's conflicts concerning the Antiochene succession after the death of Bohemond III in 1201. Also, as was described previously, there was the dispute with the Order of the Knights Templar over the possession of the castle of Baghras. Furthermore, open criticism of Roman primacy often came not only from the proponents of church unity who held high offices in the Armenian Church, but also from the pro-Rome members of the Armenian feudal hierarchy.

Nerses of Lampron was one of the most pro-Latin members of the Armenian hierarchy. Well-versed in Latin canonical laws and quite familiar with its church rituals, he took upon himself the full responsibility of implementing the itemized reforms submitted by Pope Celestine III as a condition of Levon's coronation. He defended Levon against the charges that the king's reforms had defiled the true faith of the Armenian Church Fathers. Yet he often rejected the concept of unity with the Western Church on Rome's terms asserting that though accepting some reforms might be useful to the welfare of the Armenian Church, this was in no way to be confused with the acceptance of papal supremacy over the Armenian Church.

These ecumenical battles between Rome and the Armenian hierarchy in Cilicia continued unabated in every form and in each corner of the kingdom. In 1237, the Latin patriarch of Antioch, Albert, demanded that the Armenian Church should be submissive to the Latin Church of Antioch — a papal decree was even procured to this effect. The subordination as demanded would have given the Latins room to influence Cilician political decisions; a condition not much to the liking of independent-minded Armenians. But, for the sake of sustaining the tenuous union of the two Churches, Armenian wishes prevailed. The Armenian Church autonomy was allowed to continue and was even recognized by Pope Gregory IX (1227-41) under the pretext that it was subordinate to the authority of the Roman See. The pope also confirmed that the Armenian churches in Jerusalem and throughout the crusader territories would be under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Armenian patriarch.

The failure of King Louis IX's crusade of 1248 was a decisive turning point in the political affairs of Cilicia. It demonstrated to Hetum I that any Western alliance in itself would not hold sufficient force to safeguard the security of his kingdom. He thus set a course to seek and acquire alliances with the Mongols, the new non-Muslim power rising in the East. This prudent political action by Hetum alarmed Thomas de Lentini, bishop of Bethlehem and papal legate in the Levant, to the extent that he summoned Patriarch Constantine I in 1261 to Acre demanding an explanation of Hetum's ongoing activities with the Mongols.

The ensuing meetings attended by the priest Mekhitar of Daschir and the bishop of Jerusalem, the two Armenian representatives of the patriarch, produced no significant results. However, it should be noted that these early Mongol alliances made possible, nearly two decades later, the founding of Franciscan convents in Mongol-occupied territories in Sebastia bringing Latin Christianity for the first time into the land of historic Armenia. Such

missionary contacts would have been expected to diminish the confrontational church politics between Rome and the anti-unionist faction of the Armenian clergy of the northern provinces. The reality, however, was that the Latin missionaries in Sebastia further alienated the Armenians and forced them into taking a more antagonistic position towards Rome, now perceived as determined to corrupt the true Armenian faith.

Pope Nicholas IV (1288-92) was himself a Franciscan and could see the benefits of a political alliance with the Mongols. With their help, the recovery of the holy places in the Levant from the Mamluks, so he thought, could promote the union of all the Churches under one papal guardianship. He thus took the initiative by sending his legate John of Monte-Corvino to the East with letters addressed to the heads of all the Eastern Churches including the Armenian patriarch Constantine II. Papal letters were also sent to all the members of the royal families in Cilicia, and to the members of the Armenian nobility who were staunchly pro-Latin, soliciting their co-operation and support for uniting the Holy Mother Church.

Yet this ambitious effort succeeded in producing no more than Constantine II's private profession of the Roman faith in 1288, which resulted in his deposition and exile by order of King Hetum II. Furthermore, in 1291, Acre fell and with it Western interest in the crusader movement began to diminish precipitously. A year later the Mamluk advances had brought them to the western shores of the Euphrates. They occupied Hromkla and took the patriarch Stepan (Stephen) IV, successor of Constantine II, to Egypt where he died in captivity. In 1295, Khan Ghazan embraced Islam as the Mongols' national faith, thus effectively dashing Hetum's hopes of receiving Mongol help for driving the Mamluks out of Syria and Palestine.

Despite these major religio-political setbacks for the West, the new Armenian patriarch Grigor VII took his patriarchal seat and re-established it in Sis. He called the Synod of Sis in 1307 to encourage the adoption of the reforms required by Rome. Although he died before the council could convene, his initiative had moved the Armenian clergy to proceed with the reforms, at least by the Church in Sis. The synod's achievements, however, failed to produce a union more satisfactory than those that had come earlier. The fundamental rift within the ranks of the pro-Rome and anti-Rome Armenian bishops had once more come in the way of a lasting universal fellowship.

Although, on the whole, all efforts to bring the 'schismatic' Armenian Church into the Roman fold had unequivocally been unsuccessful, Rome, nevertheless, could identify certain gains. Even after the fall of Antioch in 1268, there continued to be a Latin archbishop in Cilicia. The rites and usages of the Latin Church were extensively practised there among the sector of the mixed population originating from two centuries of intermarriages with the Latins. This was especially true within the royal families and the nobility. As was the custom of the times, the nobility and members of the royal family

often retreated into monasteries, which in the main were either Franciscan or Dominican. Hence, the influence of the Latin Church expanded and prospered in a land where a formal union of the Churches remained stubbornly elusive.

Armenian debacles with Byzantium

In Chapter one it was noted how the kingdom of ancient Armenia during the rule of the Bagratid dynasty was brought to a close in 1045 by the treacherous policies of Byzantium. The Bagratid king Gagik II was detained in Constantinople and forced under duress to renounce his throne and accept re-settlement in Byzantine Cappadocia. Patriarch Petros I Getadardz, who was left behind in charge of what remained of the kingdom of Ani, in his turn was summarily summoned to Constantinople where he was detained under confinement until his release and exile to Sebastia. His successor was his nephew Khachik II, who was likewise taken to Constantinople and kept there until his banishment by the Greeks in 1057.

These political upheavals, followed by the simultaneous influx of Armenian clans and chieftains into Cilician territories as their demonstration of feudal loyalty to the royal House of Bagratuni, produced a significant increase in the size of the Armenian population of Cilicia. These were the events that underscored the beginnings of a large-scale Armenian presence in Cilicia, which was, ironically, re-enforced and consolidated unwittingly by Byzantium's conviction that '. . . in a country partitioned among its powerful neighbours, internally divided by the rivalry of the princes and nakharars, the Church was the principal factor of national unity . . . The Church not only maintained the community of faith but it also preserved the national language and literature, and thus . . . the stronghold of Armenian nationalism.'[17]

Therefore, operating on the premise that a headless Armenian Church would bring about the collapse of Armenian resistence and deliver their Church into the Greek Orthodox fold, the Greeks for nearly a decade endeavoured diligently to prevent the installation of a new Armenian patriarch to replace Khatchik II, but they gave way to political pressure eventually and the patriarchal throne was allowed in 1065 to be filled by Grigor II Vkayaser, whose election was sanctioned by Emperor Constantine X Ducas on the condition that the patriarchal seat would not be situated in the territory of Greater Armenia. Commensurate with this condition, the new patriarch took up residence in Zamintia and began a new chapter in the ecclesiastical history of the Armenian Church in Cilicia and Upper Euphrates, a history which took the patriarchate through four centuries of persecution and uncertainty until its return to Etchmiadzin in 1441.[18]

Byzantine impositions on the Armenian Church continued to be relentless. The interventions of Emperor John II Comnenus in Armenian affairs in north Syria, especially in Antioch, in 1137 and 1138 caused the Armenian Church to

Chronological residences of the Armenian patriarchate

Period	Location	Patriarch(s) and Circumstances[14]*
301-484	ETCHMIADZIN	**Grigor Partev 'Lusavorich'** (301-25) Founder of the Armenian See. **Aristakes I** (325-33) Attended the Council of Nicaea in 325. **Nerses I, the Great** (353-73) **Sahak I, the Great** (387-439) Exiled in 428 and recalled in 432. In conjunction with Mesrop Mashtots, invented the Armenian alphabet. **Hovhannes I** (478-90) Transferred the See to Dvin in 484.
484- 928	DVIN	**Nerses II** (548-57) Presided at the Council of Dvin in 554. **Yezr I** (630-41) **Stepanos I** (788-90) **Zakaria I** (855-77) **Hovhannes V** (899-931) Transferred the See to Dzorovank in 928.
928-31	DZOROVANK	**Stepanos II** (931-32) Transferred the See to Aghtamar in 931.
931-67	AGHTAMAR	**Anania I** (943-67) Transferred the See to Arkina in 943.
967-92	ARKINA	**Khachik I** (972-92) **Sarkis I** (992-1019) Transferred the See to Ani in 992.
991-1050	ANI	**Petros I Getadardz** (1019-54) After the fall of Ani in 1045, he was detained in Constantinople until 1049. Transferred the See to Sebastia in 1050.
1050-65	SEBASTIA	**Khachik II** (1054-60) He also was detained in Constantinople until his banishment by the Greeks in 1057. He died in 1060. **Grigor II Vkayaser** (1065-1105) His election was sanctioned by the Byzantine emperor Constantine X Ducas on the condition that his seat would not be situated in the territory of Greater Armenia. Transferred the See to Zamintia in 1065.
1065-1147	ZAMINTIA	**Parsegh I** (1105-13) Shared his patriarchal time between Zamintia, Ani, Sev-Ler (Amanus) in Cilicia and Comagene.

		Grigor III Pahlavuni (1113-66) Transferred the See to Hromkla in 1147. The castle residence was part purchased from Bratrice, wife of Joscelin II. David Thornikian of Aghtamar enthroned himself in Aghtamar in 1114 as 'anti-patriarch'.
1147-1293	HROMKLA	**Nerses IV Shnorhali** (1166-73) **Grigor IV Degha** (1173-93) Presided at the Council of Hromkla in 1179. **Grigor VI Apirat** (1194-1203) **Hovhannes VI** (1203-21) **Constantine I** (1221-67) **Hagop I** (1267-86) **Constantine II** (1286-89) **Stepanos IV** (1290-92) Imprisoned in Egypt where he died in 1293. **Grigor VII** (1293-1307) Transferred the See to Sis in 1293. After his death in 1307, the Council of Sis was summoned by King Levon III to ratify his reforms.
1293-1441	SIS	**Constantine III** (1307-22) **Constantine IV** (1322-26) **Hagop II** (1327-41, 1355-59) **Mekhitar I** (1341-55) **Mesrop I** (1359-72) **Constantine V** (1372-74) **Boghos I** (1374-77) **Theodoros II** (1377-92) **Garapet I** (1393-1408) **Hagop III** (1408-11) **Grigor VIII** Usurped the seat in 1411; deposed in 1416. **Boghos II** (1416-29) **Constantine VI** Usurped the seat in 1429; died in 1439. **Grigor IX** Elected in 1439; resigned in 1441. The See reverted to Etchmiadzin.
1441-present	ETCHMIADZIN	**Kiragos I** Elected in 1441 on the occasion of the transfer of the See to Etchmiadzin; resigned in 1443.

* The listed patriarchs are not necessarily chronological. They are selected largely for the roles they played in the history of the Armenians as described in this book.

draw closer to Rome for safety and support. The Roman reaction was swift: Cardinal Alberic, the legate of Pope Innocent II (1130-43), convened a council in Jerusalem in 1140 that became instrumental in bringing the Armenian patriarch Grigor III Pahlavuni in direct contact for the first time with the Latin Church hierarchy. Samuel of Ani[19] relates how the patriarch's profession of the Armenian faith had presented him to the Latins as a distinguished Orthodox theologian.

In 1145, his envoys were received by Pope Eugenius III (1145-53) to arbitrate the persistent conflicts between the Armenian and Greek Churches over the celebration of the Eucharist and the correct date for observing Christmas. Emperor Manuel I Comnenus, successor of John II, was more prudent. His cordial rapport with the Armenians was a calculated policy to avert the possibility of Armenian subordination to the Roman See. In Chapter four an account was given of the efforts of Manuel I in his bid to subdue Cilician insurgencies which had sprung up during the first half of the 12th century under the leadership of the Roupenian Baron Toros II whose persistent and relentless pursuit of the Greeks in Cilicia had resulted in many Byzantine losses. Regional Armenian princes who opposed Toros belonged to the Hetumian House, which was pro-Byzantium and eager to provide the Greeks with assistance and engage in battle on their behalf. One such prince was Oshin II of Lampron, who with his son Hetum was captured by Toros in 1152 while serving under the command of Manuel's cousin, Andronicus Comnenus. Although Oshin and his son were released by Toros and returned to Lampron unharmed, their animosity remained a stumbling block to any semblance of goodwill and co-operation. But on one occasion in 1165 the Armenian patriarch, Grigor III Pahlavuni, sent his younger brother, Bishop Nerses Shnorhali from the patriarchal seat in Hromkla to attempt a conciliation between the two opposing Armenian clans.

On his way to Lampron, Nerses received an invitation to stop in Mamistra to visit the governor there, Prince Alexius, the son-in-law of Emperor Manuel, who was anxious to explore religious questions regarding the doctrinal differences between the Armenian and Greek Churches.[20] Whether this was a fortuitous official visit by the bishop, or a pre-meditated plan instigated and executed by his own initiative for an opportunity to speak to a high-ranking imperial representative, this unique occasion nonetheless provided the erudite Nerses with a platform to explain eloquently to Alexius the dogmatic differences that existed in their respective churches. Thus, in response to Alexius's request for a written record of the ensuing discussions, Nerses prepared a doctrinal letter that came to be known as 'The Confession of Faith of the Armenian Church'.[21] What followed from this initial encounter, surprisingly, were further commentaries between the emperor and Bishop Nerses culminating in face-to-face dialogues with the emperor's select doctrinal advisors.

Although the collective outcome of these efforts, had they run their natural course, would have produced no meaningful agreement substantially different

from any achieved before it, after eight years of consuming activity the polemics of church union ended with the death of Nerses in August 1173. Nerses and his brother Grigor were the grandnephews of Patriarch Grigor II, the maternal uncle of their father Baron Abirat. Abirat was a descendant of the Pahlavuni family who had made his residence in Edessa in the fortress of Dzovk (in the vicinity of Aintab) where the two boys were born. When Grigor III resigned his seat on 17 August 1166 (and died three months later), his brother immediately followed him to the patriarchal seat as Nerses IV.

What did transpire during the face-to-face dialogues between Nerses and Emperor Manuel's doctrinal advisors? Nerses reiterated what he had clearly stated in his first letter of confession of faith to Alexius. But Manuel's delegates — the theologian Theorianus Magistrus and the abbot of an Armenian monastery in Philippopolis, Johannes Uttman — conveyed to the emperor a self-promoting summary of their efforts, which disagreed with the factual details of their meetings with Nerses, who had insisted on the 'One Nature' doctrine emphasising that it did not refer in any way to a single nature but rather a united one of two natures.

The eight years of Machiavellian politics and intense theological arguments were however interrupted by Nerses's death. But his death came only after he had achieved a marginal success. He had convinced the Greeks that the Armenian Church does not follow the teachings of Eutychian monophysitism, a misconception held by the Greek Church until then. The Cyrillian faith of the Armenian Orthodoxy was based on the doctrine that the incarnation of the Son of God was not a metamorphosis of God into humanity nor was it a metamorphosis of humanity into God, but it was an act of God assuming flesh while still in a state of deity. Thus, Christ, the Son of God, was true God and also true man, one of two natures without confusion or division. In return, the Armenians accepted the belief that the Greek Church does not support Nestorianism in full, and that there exists between the Greek and Armenian Churches communion of the Christian faith but expressed differently as a consequence of historical traditions.

For the first time after nearly seven centuries of bitter conflict, a conciliation between the two churches was now achieved with each church showing a genuine desire to lay the foundations for their ultimate union. These efforts were continued by the new patriarch Grigor IV at the Council of Hromkla, which was convened in 1179. Unfortunately, Emperor Manuel died a year later without realising the fruits of his long-cherished objective, and his successors, less interested in theological disputes, reverted to the oppression of Armenians in the Byzantine Empire. Negotiations were suspended until 1196 when their talks resumed once more. However, despite concessions in the spirit of collaboration, the mutual suspiciousness of the prticipants caused their time-consuming examination of details to be dragged on until the dawn of the Fourth Crusade. The fall of Constantinople in 1204 put an end to direct relations with Byzantium and with that all hopes of a

union were dashed. What remains to be said in this context is that what had transpired during those remarkable years of ecumenical negotiations between emperor and clergy make eye-opening reading in the art of politico-ecclesiastical apologetics.[22]

Byzantium had traditionally sought to subjugate the Armenians. Every means was employed to achieving this aim which, however, proved forever elusive. Even Emperor Alexius III had his turn: he attempted to deflect Baron Levon II from any Western alliance by sending him a Byzantine crown to make him King of Armenia and agreed with Levon to reopen the dormant negotiations on church unity.[23] There is no question, however, the Armenian Church had feared that by facilitating its union with the Greeks it would suffer the loss of its religious autonomy and gradually also Armenian national identity, as indeed had happened with the Georgians among the Russians. But it is equally true that its opposition to the decrees of the Council of Chalcedon had determined not only its doctrine of faith within Christendom but at the same time had created the circumstances which shaped the political character and destiny of the Armenian people from the time of the fall of Ani in Greater Armenia in 1045 to the demise of the Cilician kingdom in 1375.

The ecumenical dignity of Nerses Shnorhali and his resolute defence of the faith of the Armenian Church Fathers are clearly echoed and exemplified in his letter to Emperor Manuel I Comnenus:

> Let there be an end to the reasons for which, until now, our people have fled from you. Our churches and the altars of God are ruined, our sacred objects are destroyed, our ministers are subjected to ill treatments and calumnies, the like of which we do not even suffer at the hands of the enemies of Christ who are our neighbours. For such deeds not only fail to unite those who are separated, but bring dissensions even among those who are united . . . Let us not examine in a spirit of enmity and with useless quarrels, as it was done until now, a procedure from which the church derived no benefit in all these years but was rather harmed by it; let it be done in humility and calm . . . If you should discover some evil in us or some cause of illness, not through calumny which begets hatred, but because it does exist, then cure it and we shall agree to it as one does with faithful doctors, even though the medicine be bitter. In the same way, if through the doings of the robber of souls some items foreign to the true faith have surreptitiously crept in your faith, for even the wise man nods as it is said, then you yourselves remove them from the body of the church.

The exodus

Timur the Mongol (known in the West as Tamerlane) became the Great Khan of the Mongol fief of Central Asia in 1370. While the last king of Cilician Armenia, Levon V, was held captive by the Mamluks in Cairo (1375), the

nomadic army of the Great Khan of Samarkand was mercilessly pushing across most of southern and western Asia with great ferocity and devastating conquests. It was during the last quarter of the 14th century when Timur commenced pillaging the regions of Greater Armenia beginning with Tabriz. In 1392 he captured Van and two years later conquered lands as far west as Diyarbakir. Though Ghazan Khan nearly a century earlier had declared Islam the official state religion of the Mongols, confession of the Islamic faith alone offered no refuge in the closing years of the 14th century to those who stood in the way of Timur's empire.

He swept across the Tigris and Euphrates, taking Baghdad first, then moving west towards Syria, he added Damascus to his expanding empire. Anatolia, likewise, did not have to wait long for its turn. In 1401, Timur moved his armies north into Cilician Armenia and sacked the capital city of Sis. A year later, in 1402, he took Sebastia, and moving west, he penetrated the Ottoman sultanate with devastating savagery and seized Sultan Bayezid I and his territories. Armenians in Cilicia, now fearing the worst that was yet to come, began in 1404 their accelerated but gradual exodus to safer grounds. Although —because of famine and pillage —small numbers of Armenians had been steadily fleeing Cilicia since 1375 to resettle in the Crimea, Central Europe, Syria and Iran, in the wake of Timur's ravaging barbarism they began seeking shelter in Greek Constantinople as their nearest Christian haven. But all the inhabitants of the Great City of Constantine could see the steady advance of the eastern hordes and they could not help believing that the Christian days of Constantinople would soon be over.

Also, Timur's invasion of Anatolia and his victory over Sultan Bayezid I had convinced Western Europe that the fall of the Byzantine Empire was now a *fait accompli*. But that fall had to wait until the spring of 1453. Timur's remarkable military victories were not followed-up by Mongol settlers as rulers or administrators of the conquered lands. His conquests simply took the form of a decade of political turmoil and savagery, which could only be temporary and doomed to failure.

The Council of Florence

During the first quarter of the 15th century, Byzantium was faltering. The future of the beleaguered empire did not instill much hope or confidence either in the people who had found a refuge in the empire, or in its native inhabitants who for centuries had attempted to bring to the East the torch of their version of the true Christ. The Armenians for their part had succeeded in preserving the faith of their Church Fathers and thus their ecclesiastical autonomy, but in the process they had lost first a great sovereign nation and then their kingdom in exile. Yet Rome felt there was still enough determination and goodwill in Eastern Christendom to not entirely abandon hope in drawing the Armenians ever closer into its sphere of Christian influence. The time was ripe once more

to reconsider the union of the Churches and, faced with the gravity of the Byzantine situation, Emperor John VIII resigned himself to playing the union game again in the hope of gaining potential assistance from the West for the salvation of the whole of the Christian Orient: 'Always keep the light burning for union but never bring it to a conclusion. Propose a council, open negotiations, but protract them interminably. The pride of the Latins and the obstinacy of the Greeks will never agree. By wishing to achieve union you will only widen the schism.'[24]

Pope Eugenius IV (1431-47) championed the move and invited Emperor John VIII Palaeologus and Patriarch Joseph II of Constantinople to a synod. They arrived in Venice in February 1438 and then continued their journey via Ferrara and reached Florence the following year. Invitations were also sent to the Orthodox church in Russian, which sent its representative Isidore, the Greek bishop of Kiev, and to the Armenian Church, which received the invitation through its bishopric in Constantinople. In substance, the Council of Florence turned out to be a rogue attempt at saving the Eastern Empire from its imminent collapse. It was primarily an attempt by the Roman See to press the primacy of Rome on Greek Orthodoxy and thus preserve the empire through papal leadership.

As for the Armenians, the chaotic condition of the Armenian patriarchal See in Sis in the aftermath of its persecutions precluded it from taking any immediate action on sending a delegation to Florence. The fabric of its presence in Cilicia for three centuries was now in shreds and the social structure that had supported its flock was all laid to ruin. Yet, Patriarch Constantine VI (1430-39) found amidst all this despair the courage to receive a papal emissary which had travelled down through Poland and Kaffa (Crimea) to Sis in order that it might have an audience with him. As the patriarch was in no position to travel to Florence, in his stead he appointed a member of the Syrian Orthodox Church in the person of Joachim, Bishop of Aleppo, to lead the Armenian delegation.

But before this delegation was able to reach Florence in the summer of 1439, the council had met and concluded its agenda. Subsequently, a proclamation of union was declared by the Greek and Latin signatories of the 'Tomos of Florence' (Document of Florence) which proclaimed that the Greeks had consented, among other things, to the primacy of the pope in Rome, and that the Armenian Church, after 900 years in the wilderness, was now re-united with the Holy Mother Church of Rome. Patriarch Constantine in Sis did not live long enough to read these papal proclamations — he had died only a few months earlier. His defunct and disappointed delegates left Florence but did not return to Sis. The decree of 'union' of the Council of Florence was ratified neither by the Armenian nor the Greek Church but rightfully found its place in the deepest recesses of the papal archives. It had not only failed to produce a union, but had also become an instrument that split the world of Byzantine Christian Orthodoxy. The patriarchs of the

Balkans, Russia, Antioch, Jerusalem and Alexandria unanimously renounced the decree of Florence and declared it null and void.

Return to Etchmiadzin

> Fifteen patriarchs followed in succession at Sis, from Grigor VII to Grigor IX, during the period of a century and a half (1294-1441); and it must be confessed, if we take into account the course of events which we have just related, that Sis was scarcely an auspicious seat for the patriarchate.[25]

On one hand, the outcome of the Council of Florence had germinated a great deal of false hope in Christendom and raised unnecessary religious enthusiasm in those missionary zealots who were anxious to spread the teachings of Rome to the newly enlightened Armenians. The Franciscan Order quickly established a base in Cilicia as did the Dominicans in Greater Armenia in order that conversions to the true church could be swiftly realised. On the other hand, a number of the disciples of the 'Band of Eastern Holy Divines' (bishops and clergy of the northern inland provinces of Greater Armenia) started to take fresh notice of the misfortunes their Church had befallen. They had always opposed any reconciliation with Rome or Constantinople, and their record of resistance to the matter of union stretched as far back as the resistence of their predecessors to the efforts of Nerses Shnorhali two centuries earlier.

Their resolve was to take whatever was deemed necessary to inject new life and vitality into an otherwise dying Church. Thus it was not long before a decision was made to the effect that the See of Sis was no longer tenable with the well-being of the Armenian Church and that that See should be reinstated at its original, historical, site. This decision was further inspired by the reconciliation in 1408 between the anti-patriarchal seat of Aghtamar — first occupied by the usurper David Thornikian in 1114 — and the seat of the Holy Mother Church in Sis under its reigning patriarch Hagop III. However, it is also true that there were other more fundamental, but less heralded, reasons with deep underlying nationalistic motives that generated the impetus for the move to Etchmiadzin.

The strong emphasis on scholarship and learning traditionally associated with the Armenian clergy in the medieval monasteries of Greater Armenia — a tradition transplanted in Cilicia — had all but vanished in Cilicia with the fall of its kingdom. In the shadow of encroaching Islam, the glory of Armenian culture, art, literature and traditional rituals had declined into oblivion. Furthermore, the legacy of many Cilician kings, who either enforced Catholicism upon their Armenian subjects for political reasons or confessed the Catholic faith, had succeeded in part through Catholic missions in Cilicia in introducing the Latin rituals into the liturgy of the Armenian Church there. A move to Etchmiadzin would certainly dilute the impact of this

Roman influence and curtail further adulteration of the traditional Armenian faith. Also, Etchmiadzin was geographically closer than Sis to viable Armenian populations and, unlike Sis, its role as the new seat of the Armenian Church would make it the beneficiary of the local wealth held in autonomous Armenian provinces under the aegis of their accommodating Mongol rulers — unlike the barbaric Turks in Cilicia.

An example of this was set by the large sum of money donated to Etchmiadzin in 1431 by Prince Rustam, the landed gentry of the house of Beshken Orbelian of Ayrarat province, in order that the Holy See can become self-supporting. Nonetheless, without consideration given to the above benefits, it was sufficient reason that Etchmiadzin was in Greater Armenia, the land of the ancient Armenians which had nurtured the mythical kings and heroes of the Armenians and, most of all, the roots of their Christian faith. Thus, the stage was set in 1441 for the reigning patriarch Grigor IX to affect the transfer of the See of Sis, which for three centuries had thrived under the protective umbrella of the Armenian kings of Cilicia.

To understand how Mongol rule in Greater Armenia created the political circumstances in the mid 15th century that facilitated the return of the Holy See to Etchmiadzin, it is important that we return to the beginning of the 11th century and review the regional political profile of Mesopotamia stretching from Egypt in the west to the steppes of Asia in the east.[26] During this period of Mesopotamian history, the power of the Fatimid caliphate, centred in Cairo, reached its peak under the reign of Caliph al-Mustansir (1036-94), whose Fatimid empire included the whole of North Africa, Sicily and parts of western Arabia. Further east, Iraq and western Iran were ruled by Iranian dynasties whilst central Iran was under the dominance of the Buyid Shiites. In eastern Iran, the legacy of the Turkic Samanids power was shared between the Muslim Ghaznavids south of the Oxus river and the Muslim Karakhanids north of the river.

By the end of the 11th century, however, after the death of the caliph al-Mustansir, the Fatimid power dwindled, which left the caliphate vulnerable to attacks from the west and the east. European Christian armies attacked from the west bringing with them the crusaders, and, simultaneously, a wave of invaders attacked from the east spearheaded by the Altaic peoples of the great Asian steppes. The demise of the Fatimid caliphate finally came in 1172 at the hands of the Ayyubid Seljuk leader Saladin. With the dawn of the 13th century, mostly Turkic powers dominated the whole of the Near East. They were the Mamluks of Egypt, the Ottomans of Anatolia and the Mongols (the Il-Khans of Iran and the Khans of central Asia) — all drawing their origins from the steppe peoples of central Asia. This collective Turkic power in the Near East became a lasting dilemma for Christendom because it was fundamentally Islamic in character. It began with pagan nomadic tribes that inhabited the Asian steppes and gradually moved westward until it became the Muslim power that raised the crescent of Islam on the ramparts of

Constantinople in 1453. Its development can be traced to the mid tenth century when the Turkic Uzbek Karakhanids *en masse* converted to the Islamic faith, and thus became the first Muslim Turkic political organization in the lands beyond the river Jaxartes.[27]

In their zeal for the newly acquired faith, they at once involved themselves in a holy war against their own pagan kinsmen. Their national identity with Islam had never been equalled either by the Arabs or the Persians. Far to the north, in the lands beyond the Jaxartes, lived the Oghuz Turks, and further north in the lands of the Irtish River, the Kipchak Turks. In the late tenth century, the Kipchaks began advancing from the Irtish to the Jaxartes, displacing the Oghuz, and then turned westward into south Russia and eastern Europe. The Oghuz, forced out of their native lands, migrated in waves into the surrounding Islamic territories. One among them were the 'Seljuks', who settled in the province of Bukhara and embraced Sunni Islam. The Seljuks accumulated power slowly until their leaders Tughrul and Chagri led large armies into Khurasan, crushing the Ghaznavids south of the Oxus River. In time they controlled all of eastern Iran, and then moving westward in 1055, Turghul entered Baghdad and vanquished its titular Abbasid caliphate, which ruled under the Shiite Persian house of Buyeh. By 1079, the Seljuk rulers, assuming the title of sultan, dominated Syria and Palestine. They all bore allegiance to the Great Sultan, whose centralised authority resided in Khurasan.

When the Great Sultan Malik Shah died in 1092, the ensuing struggle for power among his sons weakened the empire and this coincided with the arrival of the crusaders. Their disunity gave the crusaders the initial advantage to achieve military victories and quickly establish their feudal principalities. It took the Seljuks more than six decades to organise a power great enough to challenge the Christian intruders. And this challenge was materialised in the person of Nur al-Din, the son of Zengi of Mosul. He became the formidable adversary who confronted the crusaders with his well-heeled Muslim power that emanated from Mosul and Damascus. This power base was later extended to include Cairo under the leadership of Salah al-Din (Saladin, of Kurdish origin), who consolidated the Seljuk power to retake Jerusalem from the Europeans in 1187.[28] But history had to wait yet a century before it could record the complete expulsion of the crusaders from the Levant by the Mamluks.

In Anatolia, the Seljuks established their power base in Konya (Iconium) and, throughout the 13th century, they expanded into the surrounding areas long in the hands of the Byzantine Empire. It survived until the end of the 13th century when, far from the east, another steppe people, Mongolian immigrants from China, had begun to make their appearance on the frontiers of Seljuk Islam. These immigrants had already begun their move a century and a half earlier when they defeated the Karakhanids and controlled large tracts of land from the Oxus River all the way to the borders of China. By the

spring of 1206, their drive for a Mongol empire had gathered momentum under the leadership of Jenghiz Khan and in four decades, with their centralised authority emanating from Peking, they conquered all of Iran, Georgia, Armenia and northern Mesopotamia.

In the second half of the 13th century, Hülagü, the grandson of Jenghiz, marched into Baghdad and put to death the entire House of Abbas, the titular heads of Sunni Islam, thus ending the five century-old institution of the caliphate and laying to rest the ghost of this great Islamic symbol of unity that for the most part was already dead. However, the westward aspirations of this all-consuming force was finally checked by the Mamluk army of Egypt (commanded by Baybars) at the battle of Ayn Jalut in 1260. It was during this period that marginally successful diplomatic alliances with the Mongols of Iran were cultivated by King Hetum I against their then common Islamic foe. Because the Syro-Egyptian Mamluks were also of Turkic stock, their power together with that of the Mongols made peoples of Turkic origin the sole masters of the political landscape in the late 13th century, a landscape that stretched from the whole of western Anatolia to the steppes of central Asia.

The Mongols were at first pagans but later converted to Islam. In the Near East, they ruled centrally from Iran and were called 'Il-Khans', — subordinates of the Great Khans in Mongolia. Their conflict with Egypt over supremacy of power continued for decades until their centralised power in Iran was split into a collection of small fiefdoms ruled by local dynasties. The Mongol impact initially diminished with the passage of time — that is, until their re-emergence under Timur in 1380.

The Mamluks themselves were mainly Kipchak Turks displaced from their lands on the northern shores of the Black Sea. The Arab caliphates, especially in Egypt, had increasingly bought and imported these Turks as slaves for military service as early as the middle decades of the ninth century. The slaves gradually occupied positions of command and leadership, and wielded influence in Egypt and Syria. As the military fabric of the caliphates became predominantly Turkic, the Mamluks eventually ousted their Arab masters and founded their own Turkic dynasty with Cairo as its headquarters. Egypt provided the Mamluks with the resources they required to confront their arch-enemy, the Seljuks of Anatolia. Thus, the development of their dynasty, which began in the 13th century, continued and thrived unabated throughout the following two centuries. Iraq, the centre of Arab world, was now greatly diminished; instead Egypt became the major political and trade power linking the east with the west.

While the Mamluks consolidated their power in Egypt during the 13th century, their arch-enemy, the Seljuks, had already by the end of the century established autonomous principalities in Anatolia. One of their clans grew rapidly and took its name from its founder Osman and eventually came to be known as the Ottomans — and later the leaders of the Ottoman Empire. Throughout the 14th century Osman and his kinsmen waged incessant attacks

against the Byzantines in Anatolia and in 1354, by sheer perseverence, they crossed the Straits of Dardanelle ready to attack Constantinople. The fall of the city was expected to be only months away. However, the unexpected but remarkable intrusion of Timur in Anatolia in 1402 gave Constantine's city a half century of reprieve from oblivion. But the setbacks the Ottomans suffered under Timur were eventually restored and consolidated by Mehmed I, the son of Bayezid I. Later in the mid 15th century, the Ottoman Empire achieved its full potential under Mehmed's son Murad II. And, on 29 May 1453, after seven weeks of siege, the imperial city of Emperor Constantine the Great fell to the forces of Sultan Mehmed II, and the crescent of the Ottoman Empire was raised over the dome of the cathedral Hagia Sophia.

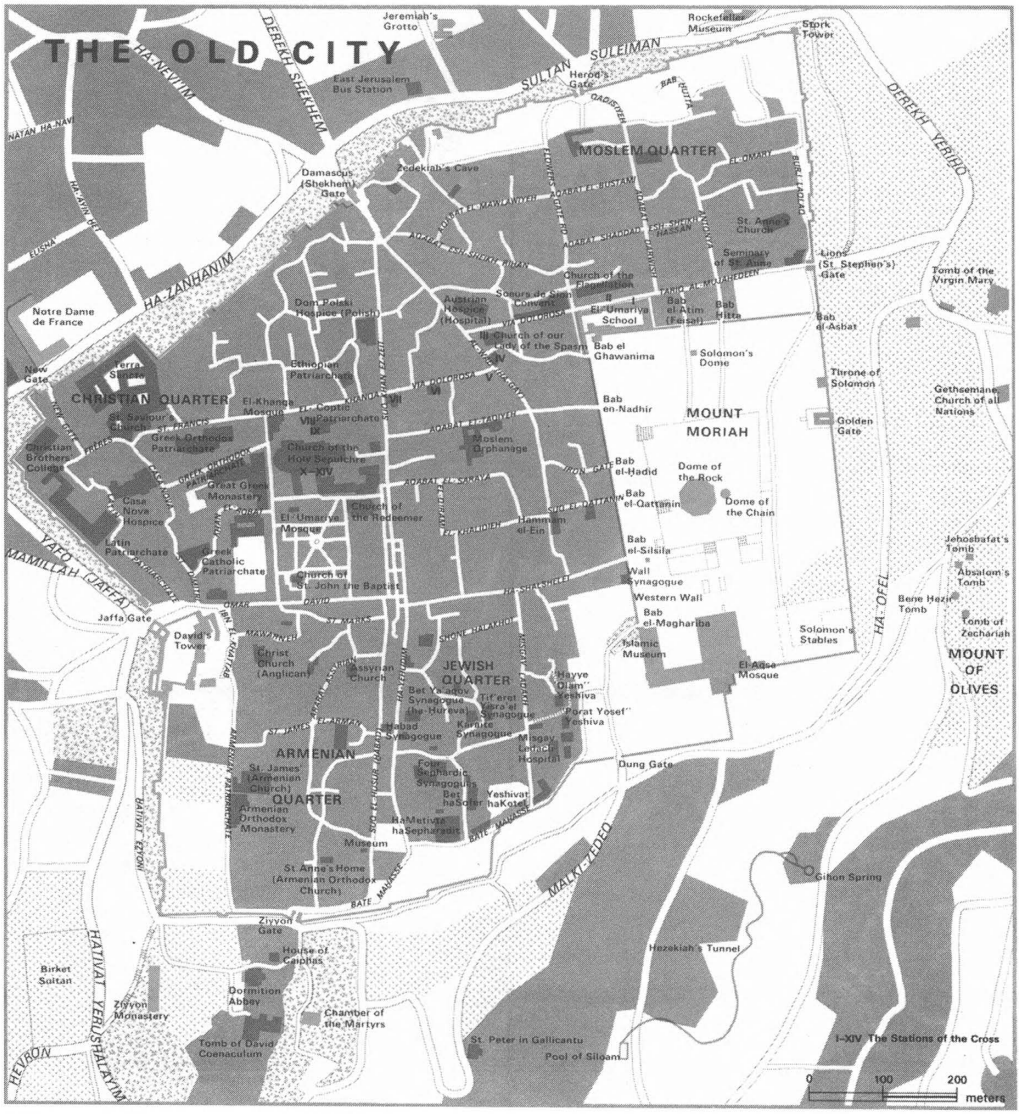
Within two years of Timur's death in 1402, vast areas in Mesopotamia, which he had overrun, became a source of conflict between his son Shah Rukh and members of an opposition clan known as Qaraqoyunlu (Black Sheep). These conflicts raged for more than three decades. In one campaign in 1420, Shah Rukh killed Qara Yusuf, the leader of Qaraqoyunlu. But when the shah retreated to his central base in Khurasan, Yusuf's son Iskandar took up his father's leadership role and retaliated by looting and plundering many areas left undefended, especially the Armenian communities in and around Van and Vostan. To counter this offensive, Shah Rukh sought and sealed an alliance with Iskandar's younger brother Jihanshah, who was appointed governor of Tabriz and Armenia. Aware of the need for the co-operation of the Armenian hierarchy, especially the clergy, in the effective conduct of his rule, the new governor followed a policy of compromise and began this by allowing small Armenian fiefdoms to function autonomously under their feudal nobles bearing the title of *ishkhan*. Emir Yaqub Bek, who resided in Yerevan, became the appointed advisor of Jihanshah in the province of Ayrarat[29] with direct authority in Vagharshapat. The political relations between the Armenians and their rulers improved to such an extent that permission was granted to rebuild ruined churches — even confiscated lands were returned to monasteries. These improvements in the social infrastructure of the 'ancient' native land of Armenia coincided with the nationalist drive to move the See from Sis to Etchmiadzin. As the stage for this move was set earlier after the Council of Florence in 1439, it was inevitable that a request would be submitted to Emir Yaqub for permission to implement the move. When the request was made in 1441, the emir summarily agreed that a meeting should take place in Vagharshapat and himself undertook the hosting of an elaborate reception for the occasion. Two days later, he granted permission. Subsequently, the general synod of the Armenian clergy, which assembled in Etchmiadzin in May of that year, chose Kirakos I of Virap as their first patriarch on the occasion of the return of the See of the Armenian Church from Sis to Etchmiadzin.

In the final analysis, the outcome of the impact of the Turkic hordes on the Armenians in Anatolia was the fall of the long-established Armenian monarchy in the region of Cilicia. With this fall, came the destruction and

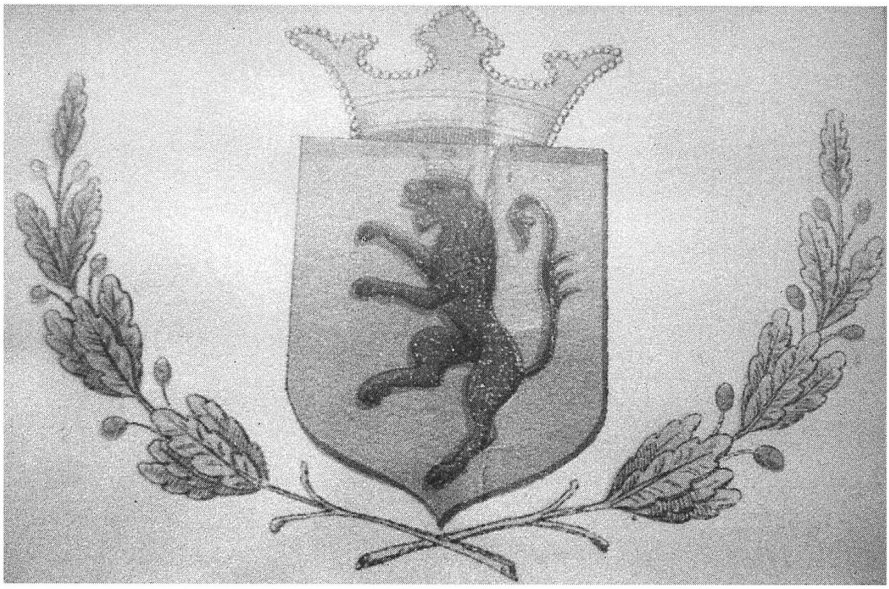
uprooting of the secular infrastructure which had kept the tenuous Armenian nation in exile cemented and functional for nearly four centuries. The death dance of this nation was undoubtedly choreographed by its endless struggle with religious authority emanating from within its own Armenian Church, as well as from Rome and Constantinople. Although the kingdom was lost, the redemption of its heritage, ironically, came also at the hands of the Armenian Church. At the critical time when the very survival of the Armenian heritage hung in balance, the institution of the Armenian Church came forward to preserve that heritage and resurrect the dismembered Armenian spirit. The Church's unequivocal role in this context was to propagate the conviction that the survival of the Armenian heritage depended on the return of the Armenian Church to its homeland in Greater Armenia where its ancient culture and time-honoured traditions could be revived and continued. In this sense the Armenian Church spoke for all Armenians everywhere, and with a voice that became 'the unrivalled instrument of leadership.'[30]

Տեառն մերոյ Յիսուսի Քրիստոսի
Teyarn meroy Hisousi Kristosi
Our Lord Jesus Christ

Further illustrations

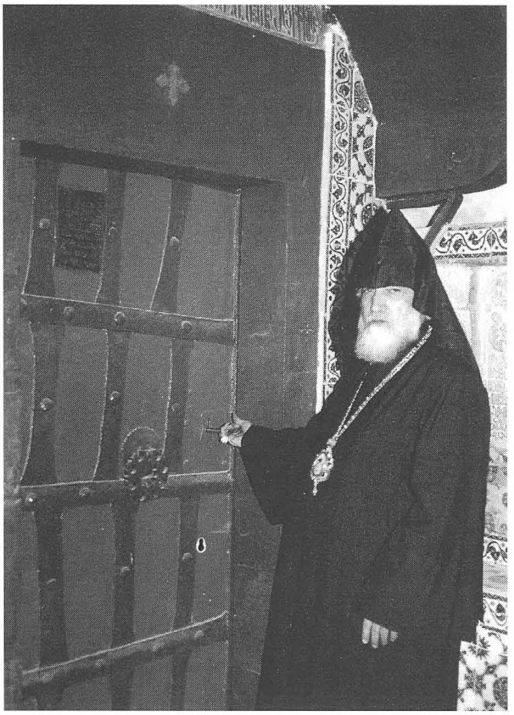


Jerusalem, the Old City



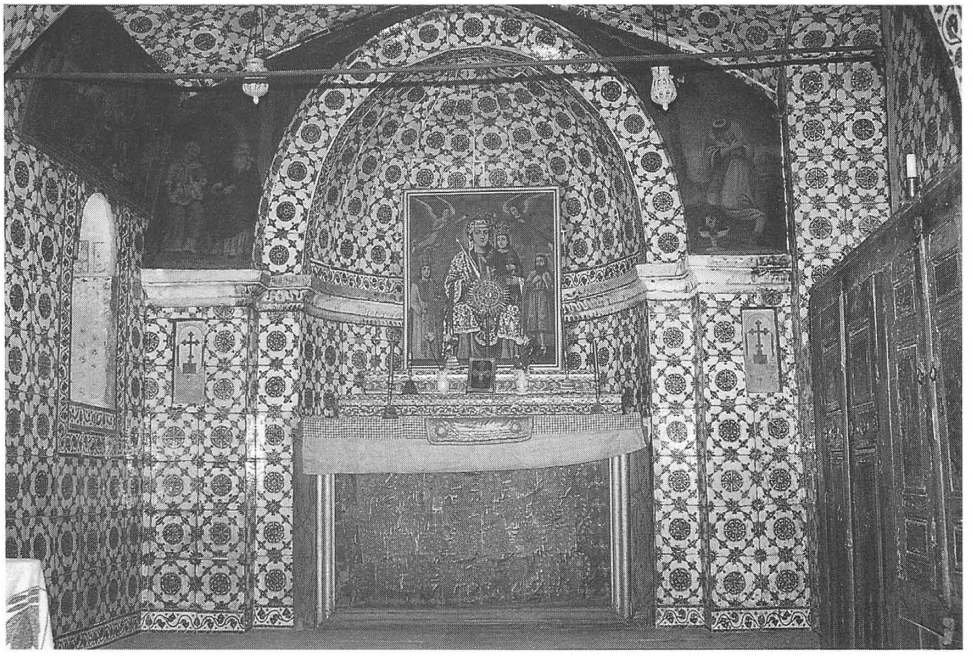
1. The Hetumian coat of arms (from the museum of St James's monastery in the Old City, Jerusalem)

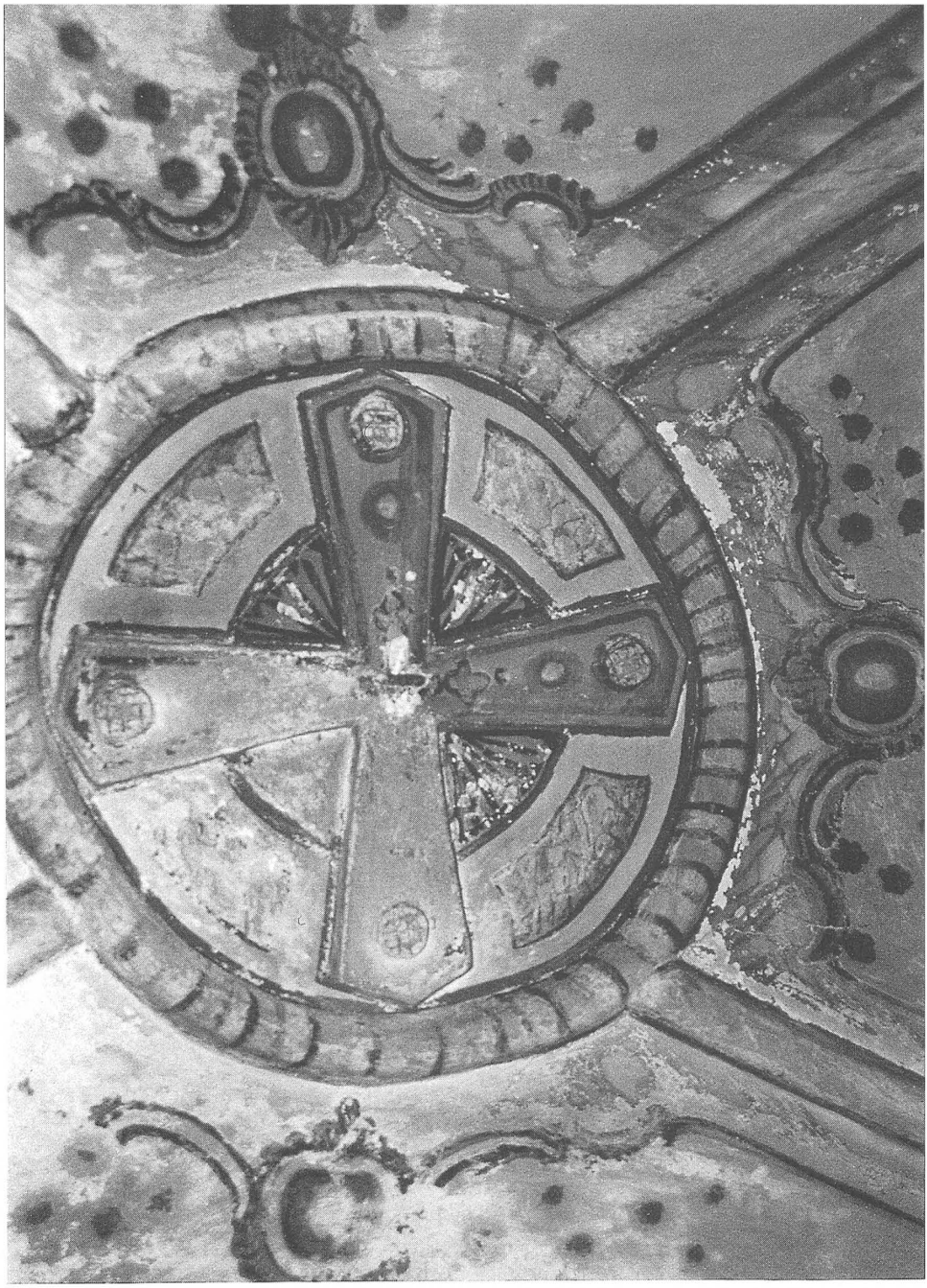
2. Bishop Sevan Gharibian and Father Rasmig Boghossian (Keepers of the Keys to Toros's chapel and adjacent scriptorium) photographed at the forecourt gate leading to the scriptorium



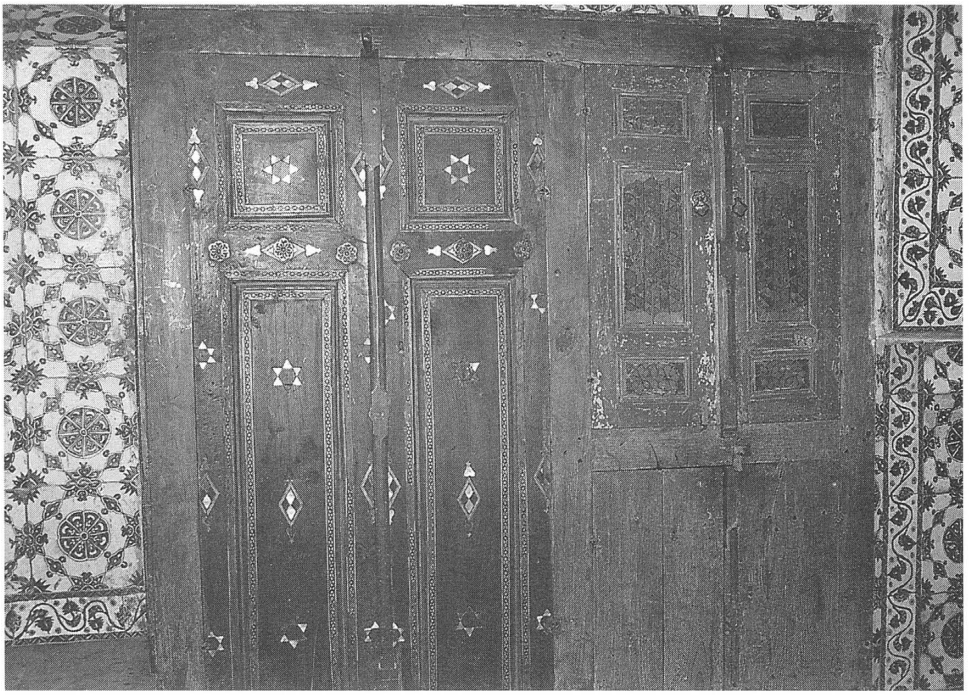
3. Bishop Sevan at the forecourt opening the door of the scriptorium adjoining Toros's chapel

4. The altar of Sourp Garabed at Toros's chapel. The gilded small wooden altar is adorned with a single icon of the Mother & Child

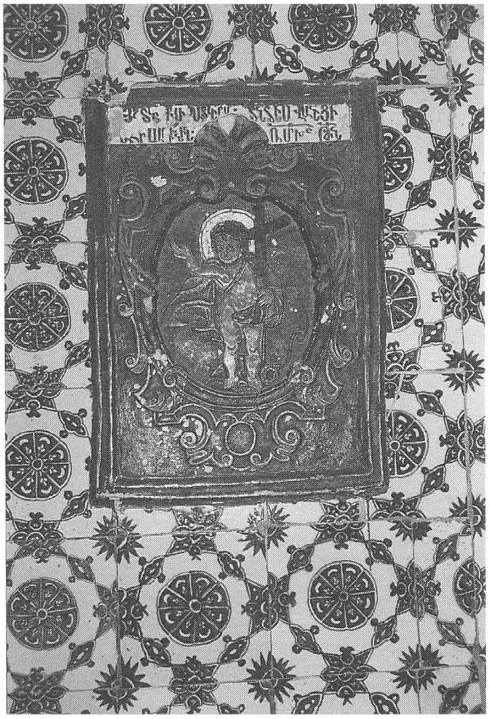




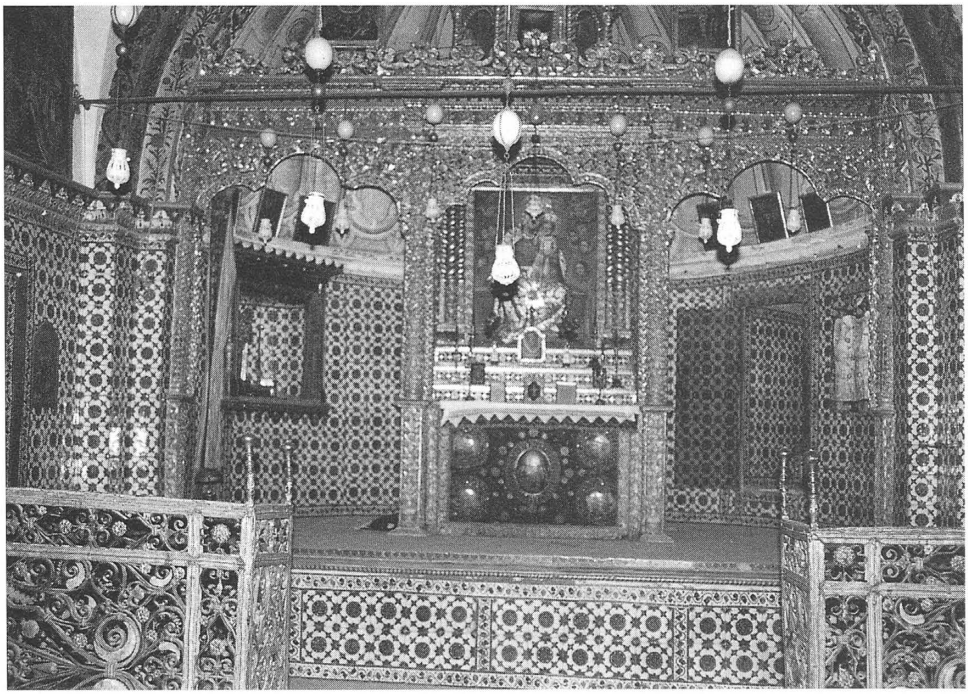
5. The painted ceiling of Toros's chapel



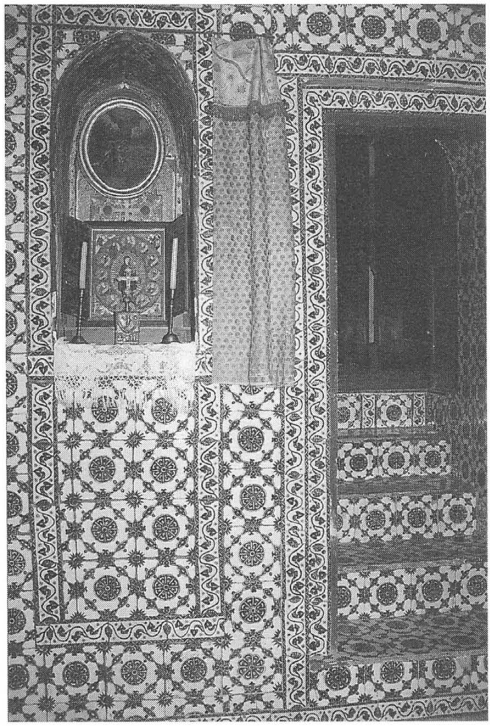
6. The oak-panelled ambries in the south wall of Toros's chapel



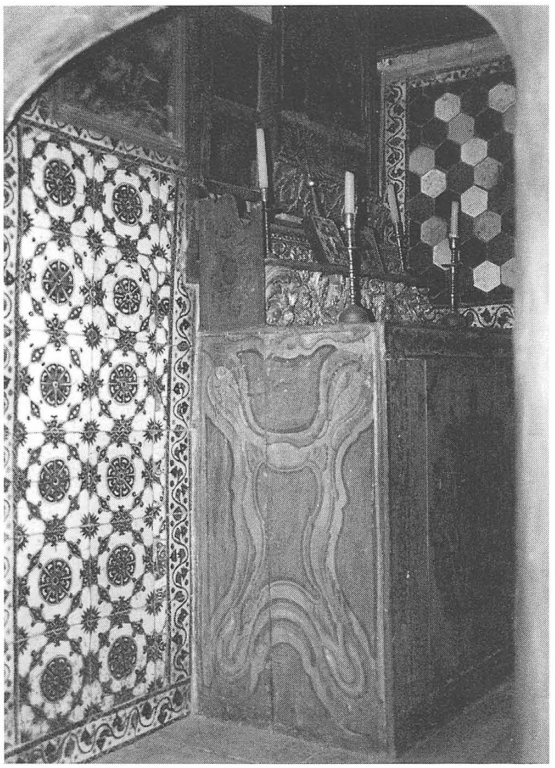
7. A porcelain wall mosaic in the south wall of Toros's chapel depicting the image of Christ the Child with a cross giving his benediction



8. The altar in the extension chamber adjoining Toros's chapel constructed (c 19th century) to house St James's scriptorium

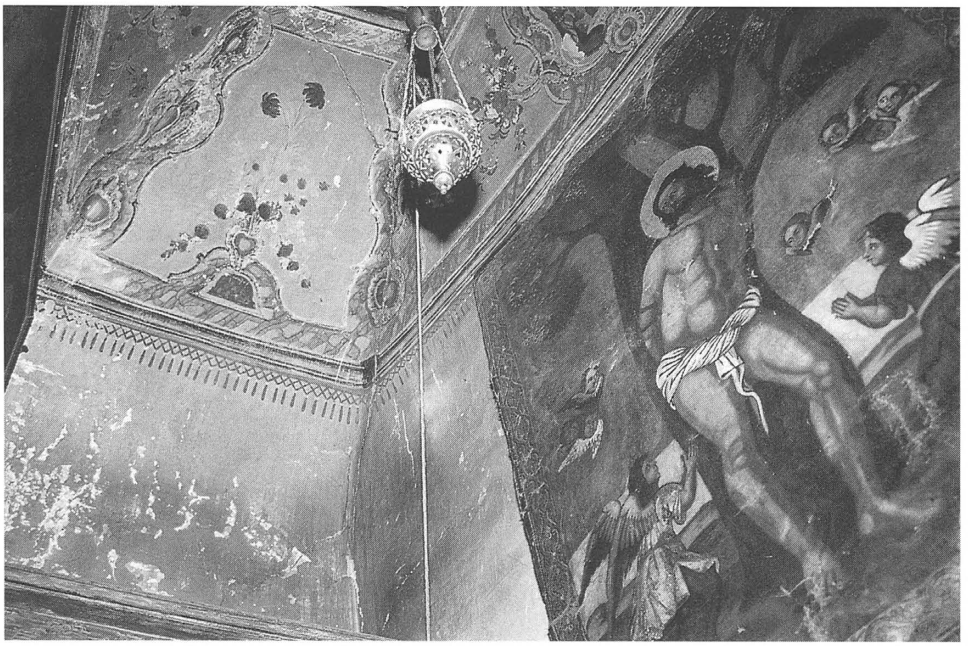


9. The tympanum and the raised passageway cut in the common wall of the large adjoining chamber leading to Toros's chapel. The shrine adornes a small ceremonial baptismal pool set between the two candles at the centre of the niche



10. The devotional altar within the edifice of Toros's tomb

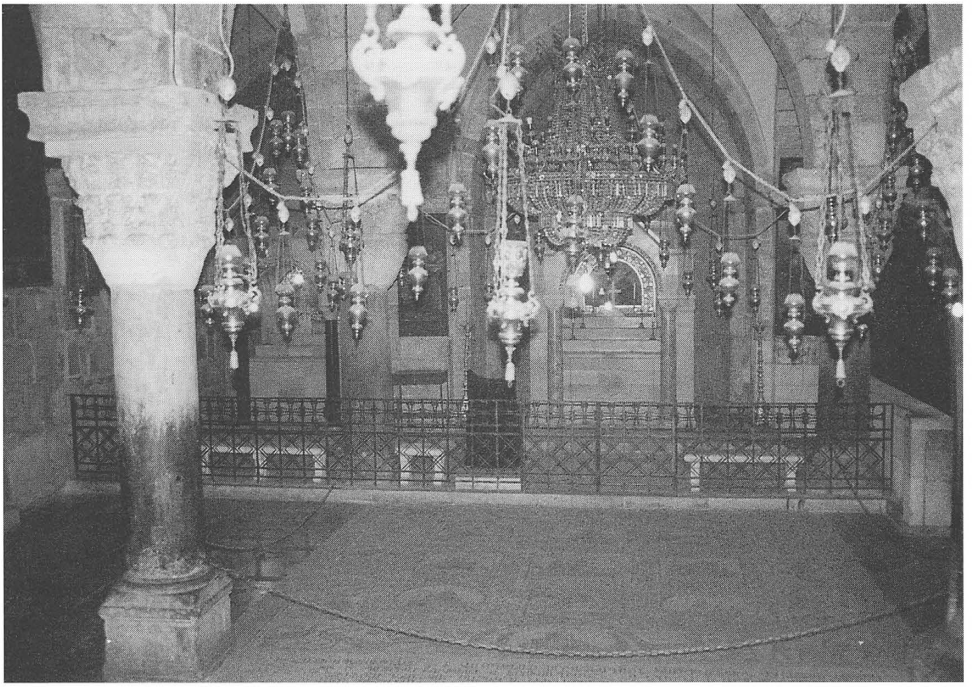
11. The painted ceiling and the north wall fresco of Toros's tomb depicting angels in adoration of the image of Christ bound to an olive tree. The genre of this and the next plate are reminiscent of the frescoes of Michelangelo



12. The south wall fresco of Toros's tomb depicting the image of the Mother & Child in a celestial setting

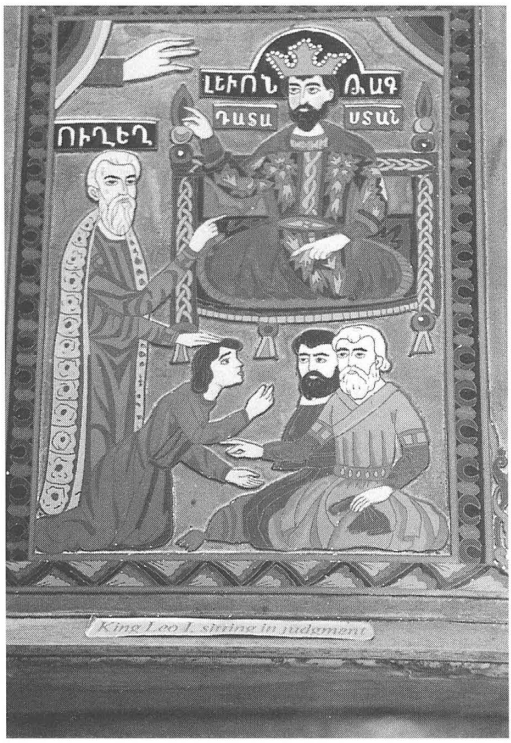
13. Hetum's door at the Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem

14. The Armenian sacristy at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in the Old City, Jerusalem



15. The Armenian altar at the base of the Rock of Golgotha in the crypt of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem

16. Pilgrims' crosses carved on the Rock of Golgotha in the conch of the Armenian altar in the crypt of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem



17. A fifth or sixth century 7x4 metre floor mosaic unearthed in St Polyeucte chapel near Damascus Gate in the Old City — Jerusalem. The chapel is constructed over a cavernous tomb filled with human remains which may represent one of the earlier examples of a Christian 'cenotaph' in the Holy Land. It commemorates the martyrdom of Christian Armenian soldiers in the Roman army, and the inscription reads: 'To the memory and salvation of all the Armenians whose names only [the] Lord knows.'

18. King Levon I sitting in judgment (from the museum of St James's monastery in the Old City, Jerusalem

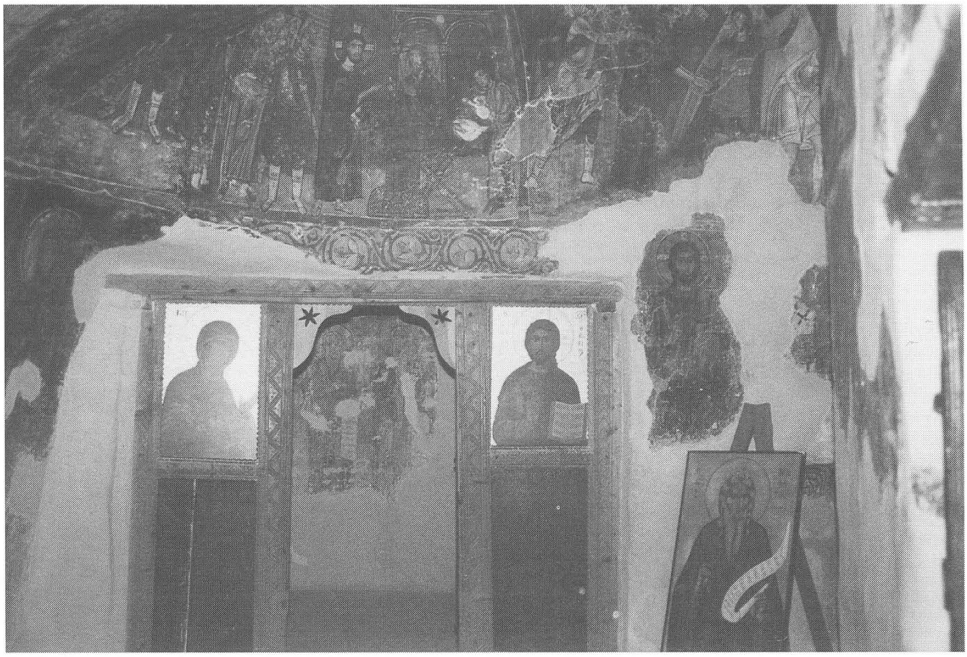
19. The approach to the village of Armenochori, Cyprus — looking north (1999)

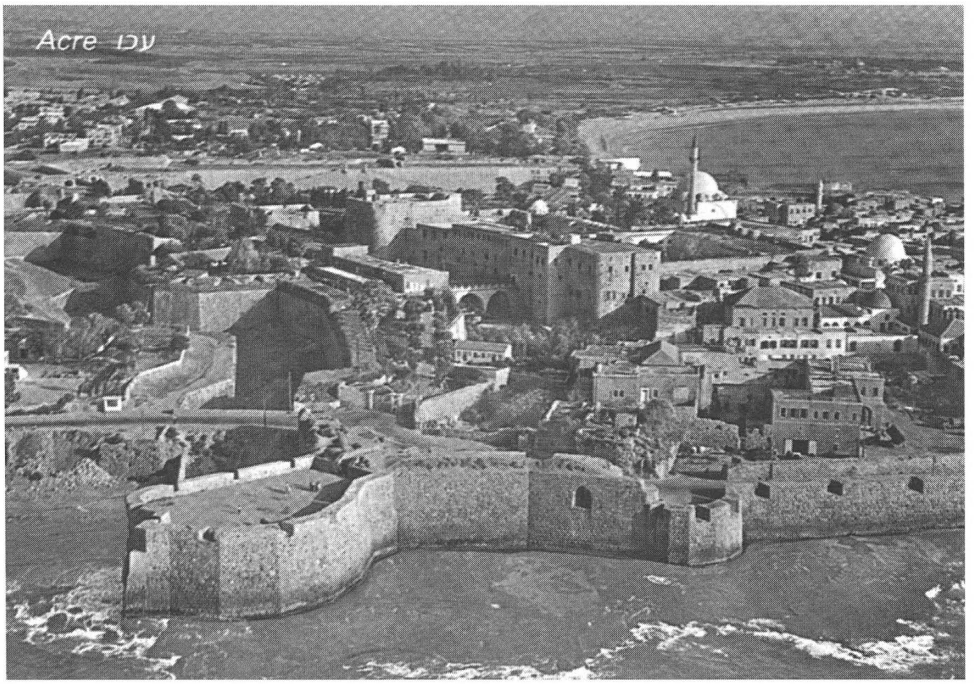
20. A view from a vantage point in the village of Armenochori — looking north and east. The distant foothills of the Troodos Mountains overlook the Akrotiri Bay in the south (1999)

21. Sourp Asdvadzadzin Armenian church (c 12th century) in Turkish Nicosia, North Cyprus — looking east and south. It sits in no-man's land within the military zone — separating Turkish Nicosia from the Greek — abandoned and in disrepair (1999)

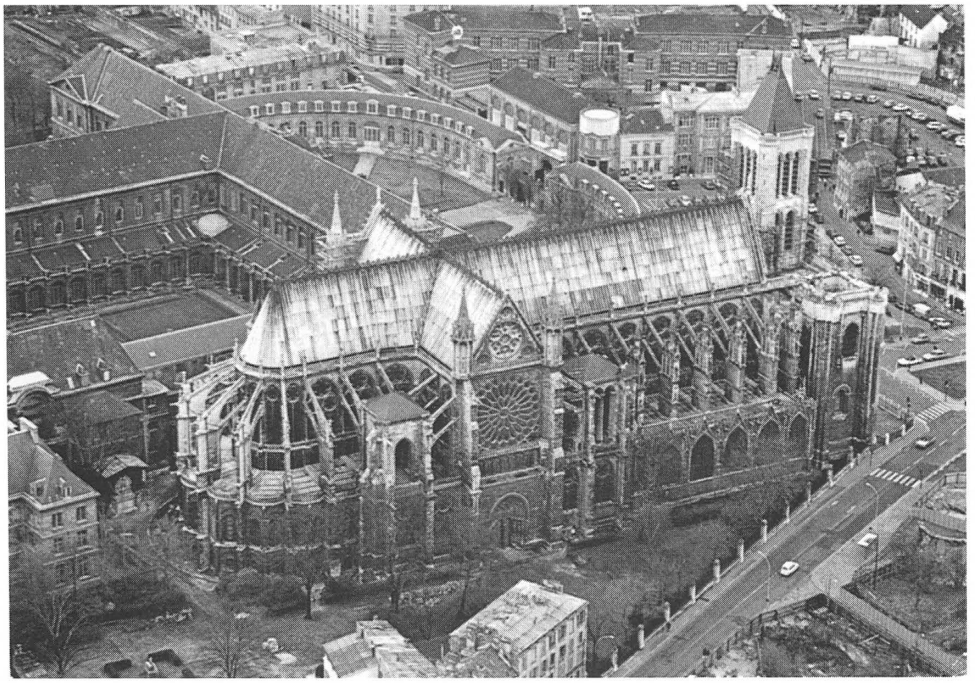
Facing page:
(Above) 22. Sourp Asdvadzadzin tombstone slabs with Armenian inscriptions removed from their original centuries-old resting places (1999)
(Below) 23. A view of the northern cloister of Sourp Asdvadzadzin with its 12th-century columns wrapped with military barbed-wire to restrict access and stripped of its tombstone slabs from their original centuries-old resting places (1999)

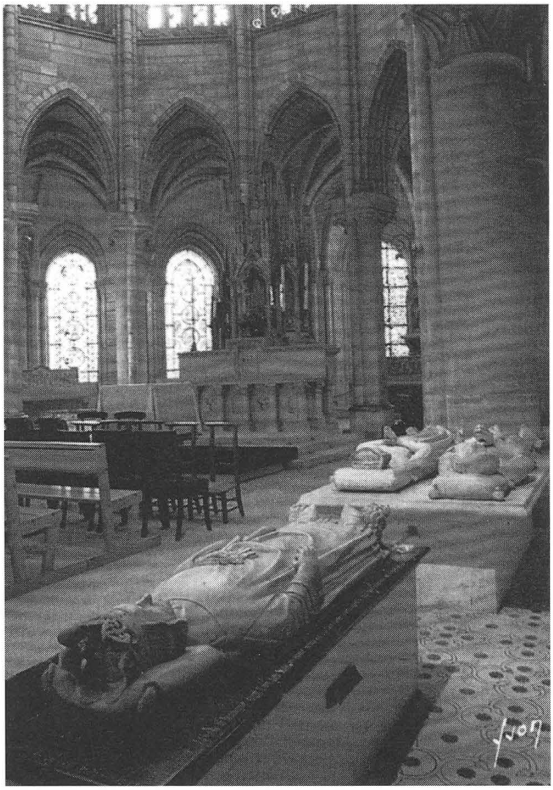
Overleaf:
(Page 222 top) 24. The cave (9km north of Pafos, Cyprus) of the 12th-century Cypriot hermit Neophytus. It was here that he wrote 'Concerning the Misfortunes of Cyprus' as he became an outspoken critic of Isaac Comnenus and King Richard I of England. His venerated image stands on the easel in the lower corner (1999)
(Page 222 bottom) 25. The central portal of the west aspect of the cathedral of St Sophia (Selimiye mosque since 1954) in Turkish Nicosia, North Cyprus — with its impressive 12th-century French craftsmanship elaborating Christian architecture (partly disfigured). Its conversion to a mosque began when the Turks took Nicosia in 1570 (1999)
(Page 223) 26. The massive cylindrical columns with marble capitals defining the now carpeted nave of St Sophia lead to the semi-circular apse at the east end of the cathedral where Amaury de Lusignan's coronation as the first king of Cyprus took place in 1197 (1999)





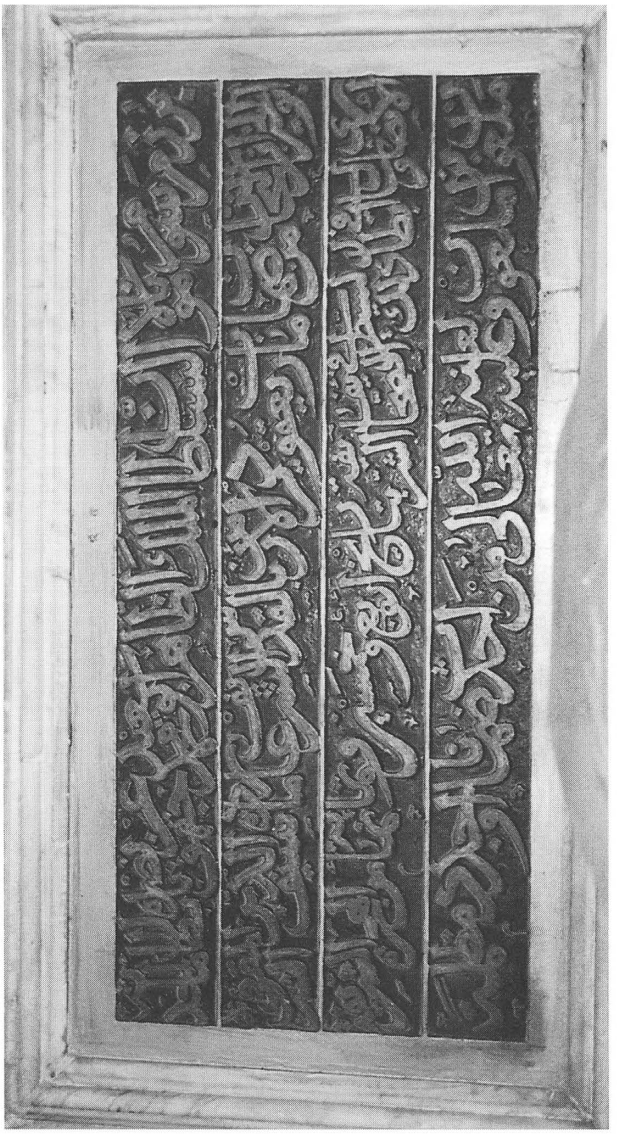
(Above) 27. The city of Acre and its walled harbour. (Below) 28. The Basilica of St Denis in Paris.





29. The effigy of King Levon V in the Basilica of St Denis — Paris

30. The main entrance to the Armenian Monastery of St James in the Old City — Jerusalem



31. The testimonial inscription of Sultan Jaqmaq's edict at the entrance of St James's Armenian monastery in the Old City — Jerusalem, which reads: 'The decree of our Lord Sultan al-Zahir Abu Said Mohammed Chaqmaq, is displayed to rescind the annual tribute imposed by Abu al-Kheir ibn al-Nahhas on the Armenian convent Mar Ya'qub in Jerusalem. The rescinding was verified and endorsed by al-Muqirr (the registrar) Saif al-Din al-Sharafi al-Ansari, and recorded in the official registers in the year 854 of the Hijra Sharifa. May God's curses fall upon and follow, till the end of time, whosoever imposes a tribute or inflicts an injustice.'

Chronologies

Summary of the contiguous powers and their origins that ruled in the Near East from the 10th to 15th centuries

ASIA	ANATOLIA	BAGHDAD	MOSUL	SYRIA (Damascus)	PALESTINE (Jerusalem)	EGYPT (Cairo)	CHINA
	Byzantine	Early Abbasids				969 Fatimids (Shi'i)	
c 990 Seljuks (Oghuz Turks)					1009 Fatimids		
		1055 Seljuks (Turghul)					c 1050 Mongols
				1079 Seljuks	1074 Seljuks		
	c 1080 Seljuks				1098 Fatimid (Al-Afdal)		
					1099 The West (Crusaders)		
			1127 Seljuks (Zengi)	1127 Seljuks (Zengi)			
			c 1160 Seljuks (Nur al-Din)	c 1160 Seljuks (Nur al-Din)			
						1172 Seljuks (Ayyubid Salah al-Din)	
					1187 Seljuks (Salah al-Din)		
				c 1200 Mamluks (Kipchak Turks)		c 1200 Mamluks (Kipchak Turks)	
							1206 Mongols (Jenghiz Khan)
					1221 Seljuks (Ayyubid al-Kamil)		
					1229 The West (Frederick II)		
					1239 Ayyubids		
					1244 Mamluks		
		c 1260 Mongols (Hülagü)					
	c 1300 Seljuks (Osman)						
							1370 Mongols (Timur)
		c 1380 Mongols (Timur)		c 1380 Mongols (Timur)			
	1402 Mongols (Timur)						
	c 1430 Seljuks (Ottomans)						
					1537 Seljuks (Ottomans)		

Chronology of powers in the Near East

10th CENTURY

Shared Samanid power in eastern Iran by:
a) Ghaznavids, south of the Oxus
b) Karakhanids, north of the Oxus.

910 Establishment of Fatimid caliphate in North Africa.

Mid 10th century Karakhanids convert to Islam.

969 Fatimids conquer Egypt and rule from Cairo.

Late 10th century Kipchak Turks displace the Oghuz and move to eastern Europe.
Oghuz Turks led by the Sunni Seljuk family resettle in Bukhara.

11th CENTURY

Mid 11th century Mongols from China defeat the Karakhanids and annexe their lands.

Mid 11th century Turghul crushes the Ghaznavids in Khurasan.

1055 Turghul seizes Baghdad from Emir Buyid.

1070-89 Seljuks dominate Syria and Palestine.

1092 Malik Shah dies.

1094 Fatimid Caliph al-Mustansir dies.

12th CENTURY

Mid 12th century Zangi and Nur al-Din wield power from Mosul to Damascus.

1172 Salah al-Din extends Sunni Seljuk power to Egypt and ends the Shiite Fatimid caliphate. He founds the Ayyubid dynasty.

1174 Nur al-Din dies;
Salah al-Din leaves Egypt to take Damascus.

1183 Salah al-Din captures Aleppo and unites Egypt and Syria under his rule.

1187 Salah al-Din wins the battle of Hattin and captures Jerusalem.

1192 King Richard of England fails to regain Jerusalem. His three-year truce ends the Third Crusade.

1193 Salah al-Din dies.

13th CENTURY

13th century	Seljuk power extends into Anatolia.
1206	Jenghiz Khan begins the first cycle of Mongol conquests.
1220	Mongols conquer eastern territories of the caliphate.
1244	Muslims retake Jerusalem.
Mid 13th century	Mongols dominate Iran, Georgia, Armenia, Mesopotamia and Anatolia. Emergence of Mamluk sultanate in Egypt and Syria and the decline of the Ayyubids.
1260	Hülagü marches into Baghdad.
1260	Syro-Egyptian Mamluks under Baybars check Hülagü's westward advance at the battle of Ayn Jalut.
1295	Mongols embrace Islam. End of their first cycle of conquests.
1291	Acre falls to the Mamluks.
Late 13th century	New wave of Oghuz Turks under Osman become established in Anatolia.

14th CENTURY

1331	Ottomans take Nicaea.
1354	Ottomans cross the Dardanelle Straits into Europe.
1375	Timur sacks Tàbriz and Armenia. He Begins the second cycle of Mongol conquests.
1392	Timur captures Van.
1394	Timur captures Diyarbakir, Baghdad and Damascus.

15th CENTURY

1401	Timur enters Cilician Armenia and Anatolia.
1402	Timur seizes the sultanate of Bayezid I. Timur dies.
1420	Based in Khurasan, Shah Rukh, son of Timur, kills his opposition Qara Yusuf, the leader of Qaraqoyunlu.
1420	Shah Rukh appoints Jihanshah, younger son of Qara Yusuf, governor of Tàbriz and Armenia to stem the plundering of Van and Vostan by Qara Yusuf's eldest son Iskandar.
1420	Yaqub Bek is appointed advisor to Jihanshah in the province of Ayrarat.
1439	Council of Florence fails to unite the Armenian Church with Rome.
1439	Request is submitted to Yaqub Bek for permission to move the Armenian Holy See to Echmiadzin.
1441	The Armenian Holy See at Sis is returned to Etchmiadzin.
1453	Constantinople falls to the Ottomans.

Chronology of Byzantine emperors & empresses 4th–15th centuries

Constantine I	324-37	Constantine VI	780-90
Constantius II	337-61	Irene	790
Julian	361-63	Constantine VI (again)	790-97
Jovian	363-64	Irene (again)	797-802
Valens	364-78	Nicephorus I	802-11
Theodosius I	379-95	Stauracius	811
Arcadius	395-408	Michael I Rhangabe	811-13
Theodosius II	408-50	Leo V	813-20
Marcian	450-57	Michael II	820-29
Leo I	457-74	Theophilus	829-42
Leo II	474	Michael III	842-67
Zeno	474-75	Basil I	867-86
Basiliscus	475-76	Leo VI	886-912
Zeno (again)	476-91	Alexander	912-13
Anastasius I	491-518	Constantine VII	913-59
Justin I	518-27	Romanus I Lecapenus	920-44
Justinian I	527-65	Romanus II	959-63
Justin II	565-78	Nicephorus II Phocas	963-69
Tiberius I	578-82	John I Tzimiskes	969-76
Maurice	582-602	Basil II	976-1025
Phocas	602-10	Constantine VIII	1025-28
Heraclius	610-41	Romanus III Argyrus	1028-34
Constantine III	641	Michael IV	1034-41
Heraclonas	641	Michael V	1041-42
Constans II	641-68	Zoe & Theodora	1042
Constantine IV	668-85	Constantine IX Monomachus	1042-55
Justinian II	685-95	Theodora	1055-56
Leontius	695-98	Michael VI	1056-57
Tiberius II	698-705	Isaac I Comnenus	1057-59
Justinian II (again)	705-11	Constantine X Ducas	1059-67
Philippicus	711-13	Romanus IV Diogenes	1068-71
Anastasius II	713-15	Michael VII Ducas	1071-78
Theodosius III	715-16	Nicephorus III Botaneiates	1078-81
Leo III	716-40	Alexius I Comnenus	1081-1118
Constantine V	740-775		
Leo IV	775-80		

John II Comnenus	1118-43
Manuel I Comnenus	1143-80
Alexius II Comnenus	1180-83
Andronicus I Comnenus	1183-85
Isaac II Angelus	1185-95
Alexius III Angelus	1195-1203
Isaac II & Alexius Angelus	1203-04
Alexius V Murtzuphlus	1204
Theodore I Lascaris	1204-22
John III Ducas Vatatzes	1222-54
Theodore II Lascaris	1254-58
John IV Lascaris	1258-61
Michael VIII Palaeologus	1258-82
Andronicus II Palaeologus	1282-1328
Andronicus III Palaeologus	1328-41
John V Palaeologus	1341-91
John VI Cantacuzenus	1347-55
Andronicus IV Palaeologus	1376-79
John VII Palaeologus	1390
Manuel II Palaeologus	1391-1425
John VIII Palaeologus	1425-48
Constantine XI Palaeologus	1449-53

Papal chronology
4th–15th centuries

Marcellus I	306-09	Sabinian	604-06
Eusebius	310	Boniface III	607
Miltiades	311-14	Boniface IV	608-15
Silvester I	314-35	Adeodatus I	615-18
Mark	336	Boniface V	619-25
Julius I	337-52	Honorius I	625-38
Liberius	352-66	Severinus	640
Damasus I	366-84	John IV	640-42
Siricius	384-99	Theodore I	642-49
Anastasius I	399-401	Martin I	649-53
Innocent I	401-17	Eugene I	654-57
Zosimus	417-18	Vitalian	657-72
Boniface I	418-22	Adeodatus II	672-76
Celestine I	422-32	Donus	676-78
Sixtus III	432-40	Agatho	678-81
Leo I	440-61	Leo II	682-83
Hilarus	461-68	Benedict II	684-85
Simplicius	468-83	John V	685-86
Felix II	483-92	Canon	686-87
Gelasius I	492-96	Sergius I	687-701
Anastasius II	496-98	John VI	701-05
Symmachus	498-514	John VII	705-07
Hormisdas	514-23	Sisinnius	708
John I	523-26	Constantine	708-15
Felix III	526-30	Gregory II	715-31
Boniface II	530-32	Gregory III	731-41
John II	533-35	Zacharias	741-52
Agapitus I	535-36	Stephen I	752
Silverius	536-37	Stephen II	752-57
Vigilius	537-55	Paul I	757-67
Pelagius I	556-61	Stephen III	768-72
John III	561-74	Hadrian I	772-95
Benedict I	575-79	Leo III	795-816
Pelagius II	579-90	Stephen IV	816-17
Gregory I	590-604	Paschal I	817-24

Eugene II	824-27	Benedict VIII	1012-24
Valentine	827	John XIX	1024-32
Gregory IV	827-44	Benedict IX	1032-45
Sergius II	844-47	Silvester III	1045
Leo IV	847-55	Gregory VI	1045-46
Benedict III	855-58	Clement II	1046-47
Nicholas I	858-67	Benedict IX (again)	1047-48
Hadrian II	867-72	Damasus II	1048
John VIII	872-82	Leo IX	1049-54
Marinus I	882-84	Victor II	1055-57
Hadrian III	884-85	Stephen IX	1057-58
Stephen V	885-91	Nicholas II	1058-61
Formosus	891-96	Alexander II	1061-73
Boniface VI	896	Gregory VII	1073-85
Stephen VI	896-97	Victor III	1085-87
Romanus	897	Urban II	1088-99
Theodore II	897	Paschal II	1099-1118
John IX	898-900	Gelasius II	1118-19
Benedict IV	900-03	Calixtus II	1119-24
Leo V	903	Honorius II	1124-30
Sergius III	904-11	Innocent II	1130-43
Anastasius III	911-13	Celestine II	1143-44
Lando	913-14	Lucius II	1144-45
John X	914-28	Eugenius III	1145-53
Leo VI	928	Anastasius IV	1153-54
Stephen VII	928-31	Hadrian IV	1154-59
John XI	931-36	Alexander III	1159-81
Leo VII	936-39	Lucius III	1181-85
Stephen VIII	939-42	Urban III	1185-87
Marinus II	942-46	Gregory VIII	1187
Agapitus II	946-55	Clement III	1187-91
John XII	955-64	Celestine III	1191-98
Leo VIII	963-65	Innocent III	1198-1216
Benedict V	964	Honorius III	1216-27
John XIII	965-72	Gregory IX	1227-41
Benedict VI	973-74	Celestine IV	1241
Benedict VII	974-83	Innocent IV	1243-54
John XIV	983-84	Alexander IV	1254-61
John XV	985-96	Urban IV	1261-64
Gregory V	996-99	Clement IV	1265-68
Silvester II	999-1003	Gregory X	1271-76
John XVII	1003	Innocent V	1276
John XVIII	1003-09	Hadrian V	1276
Sergius IV	1009-12	John XXI	1276

Papal chronology

Nicolas III	1277-80	Boniface IX	1389-1404
Martin IV	1281-85	Innocent VII	1404-06
Honorius IV	1285-87	Gregory XII	1406-09
Nicholas IV	1288-92	Alexander V	1409-10
Celestine V	1292-94	John XXIII	1410-15
Boniface VIII	1294-1303	Benedict XIII	1415-17
Clement V	1305-14	Martin V	1417-31
John XXII	1316-34	Eugenius IV	1431-47
Benedict XII	1334-42	Nicholas V	1447-55
Clement VI	1342-52	Pius II	1458-64
Innocent VI	1352-62	Paul II	1464-71
Urban V	1362-70	Sixtus IV	1471-84
Gregory XI	1370-78	Innocent VIII	1484-92
Urban VI	1378-89	Alexander VI	1492-1503

A chronology of Jerusalem

THE FIRST PERIOD (C. 1004-586 BC)

1010-970	Reign of King David.
c. 1004	King David captures Jerusalem from the Jebusites.
c. 960	King Solomon begins to build the First Temple.
722	Assyrians conquer the northern Kingdom of Israel.
701	Hezekiah repels Sennacherib's attack on Jerusalem.
597	Babylonians capture Jerusalem.
586	Nebuchadnezzar destroys Jerusalem and the First Temple.

THE PERSIAN PERIOD (539-332 BC)

539	Fall of Babylon.
537	Cyrus allows the Jews to return to Jerusalem from Babylon.
520	Work begins on the building of the Second Temple under Zerubbabel.
515	Completed Second Temple is re-dedicated.
445	Nehemiah is appointed Governor of Judea by Artaxerxes. He rebuilds the city walls.

THE HELLENISTIC PERIOD (332-167 BC)

332	Alexander the Great conquers Palestine.
332	Alexander dies in Babylon.
320	Jerusalem under Ptolemy I.
198	Jerusalem under Syrian Seleucids.
167	Antiochus IV desecrates the Second Temple.

THE HASMONEAN PERIOD (167-143 BC)

167	Maccabean War of Liberation.
164	Judah Maccabee captures Jerusalem.
160	Rule of Jonathan.
143	Rule of Simon Maccabeus.

THE ROMAN PERIOD (63 BC-135 AD)

63-18 BC

63	Pompey conquers Jerusalem.
63	Hasmoneans rule Jerusalem as a Roman protectorate.
40	Reign of Herod the Great in Judea under Rome.
37	Herod captures Jerusalem.
18	Herod begins re-building of the Temple.

First and second centuries AD

26	Pontius Pilate governs Jerusalem.
63	Completion of the Temple.
66	Jews revolt against the Romans.
70	Titus destroys Jerusalem and the Second Temple.
135	Hadrian re-builds Jerusalem. He bans Jews from the city and builds new walls.

THE BYZANTINE PERIOD (313-628 AD)

313	Constantine the Great issues the Edict of Milan.
326	Constantine builds the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.
438	Empress Eudocia allows Jews to live in Jerusalem.
438	Founding of the Armenian Monastery of St Minas.
614	Persians conquer Jerusalem.
628	Heraculis recaptures Jerusalem.

EARLY MUSLIM PERIOD (638-1225 AD)

638	Caliph Umar conquers Jerusalem.
691	Dome of the Rock is built by Caliph Abd al-Malik.
715	Al-Aqsa mosque is completed by al-Walid al-Malik.
750	Power shifts from Umayyads of Damascus to the Abbasids of Baghdad.
969	Fatimids conquer Jerusalem.
1048	Italian merchants establish a hospital served by the brothers of St John.
1074	Seljuks devastate Jerusalem.
1098	Al-Afdal al-Jamali recaptures Jerusalem from the Fatimids.
1099	Crusaders arrive in Palestine. Godfrey de Bouillon captures Jerusalem.
1187	Seljuk (Kurdish) Ayyubid general Salah al-Din captures Jerusalem.
1189	Acre falls to Salah al-Din.
1190	Conrad of Montferrat marries Isabel of Jerusalem. He claims the throne of Jerusalem.
1191	Richard I of England retakes Acre and defeats Salah al-Din at Arsuf.

1192	Henry of Champagne marries Isabel and rules the kingdom of Jerusalem.
1193	Salah al-Din dies.
1197	Henry of Champagne dies.
1197	Amaury weds Isabel and is crowned king of Jerusalem.
1205	Amaury dies.
1210	John d'Brienne and his wife Mary are crowned rulers of Jerusalem.
1221	Crusaders surrender to Ayyubid caliph al-Kamil.
1225	Frederick II marries Isabel d'Brienne and claims the throne of Jerusalem.

LATE MUSLIM PERIOD (1229-1537 AD)

1229	Frederick II gains Jerusalem under terms of treaty with Ayyubid caliph al-Kamil.
1238	Death of al-Kamil touches off struggle among Ayyubids. Dismantling of Jerusalem's fortifications takes place.
1239	Ayyubids take control of Jerusalem.
1244	Mamluks oust Ayyubids and take control of Jerusalem.
1250	Frederick II dies.
1268	Hugh III of Cyprus claims the throne of Jerusalem.
1277	Charles of Anjou purchases claim to throne of Jerusalem.
1286	Henry II of Cyprus is crowned king of Jerusalem at Tyre.
1291	Acre falls to the Mamluks under Sultan al-Ashraf. End of the kingdom of Jerusalem.
1348	Black Death devastates Jerusalem.
1492	Resettlement of Jews from Spain.
1517	Jerusalem becomes part of the Ottoman Empire.
1537	Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent rebuilds the city walls.

Notes

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5. Kuhrt, 1997, vol. 2, pp. 548-562.
6. Russell, op. cit., pp. 30-31.
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8. W. E. Kaegi, 1992, pp. 181-204.
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10. P. Lemerle, 1963, pp. 5-49.
11. Kaegi, op.cit.
12. C. Mango, 1994, pp. 50-51; M. Chahin, 1991, p. 264.
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19. S. Vryonis, Jr., 1957, vol. 11, pp. 263-277.
20. E. Uras, 1988, p. 297.
21. R. W. Thomson, 1967, pp. 432-438.
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23. C. Toumanoff, 1967, p. 411.
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2. The heritage of the new kingdom

1. Before John's first term, the order of patriarchal succession was as follows: Gregory VI

Abirat (1195-1202), Gregory V Karavege (1193-95) and Gregory IV Degha (1173-93), who became the patriarch after the death of Nerses Shnorhali.
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6. W. R. E. Long, 1934.
7. M. Chamich, 1827, vol. 2, p. 262.
8. RHC. H Or, I, pp. 745-758.
9. RHC. D Arm, II, pp. 326-331.
10. Chamich, op. cit.
11. RHC. D Arm, II, pp. 37-38.
12. d'Amadi, p. 254,
13. ibid., pp. 253-254.
14. Anni Secundus et Tertius, RCP, 1886, nos. 2434-2437.
15. d'Amadi, p. 280.
16. Perrat, op. cit., 52, 68.
16. RHC. D Arm.
17. ibid., p. 45.
18. ibid., pp. 205-206.
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20. T. S. R. Boase, 1978, p. 30.

3. *The first Latin encounters*

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2. P. Jaffe, 1865, vol. 2, pp. 423-4.
3. William of Tyre, pp. 234-4, 721; J. B. Segal, 1970, pp. 81-7, 100-9, 174-6.
4. Usama ibn Munqidh, 1929, p.231.
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6. M. E. Stone, 1986, pp. 93-110.
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15. Ernoul, p. 322; E. G. Rey, 1883, p. 385.
16. William of Tyre, pp. 754-55.
17. H. E. Mayer, 1972.
18. J. P. Minge, 1841-64, 214, 814f.
19. A. Potthast, 1874-75, I-II, 909, 910.
20. J. Phillips, 1997, p. 153.
21. Albert of Aix, 4:3.
22. D. French, 1981, p. 105.
23. J. France, 1994, pp. 190-95.
24. C. Cahen, 1940, pp. 209-10.
25. Matthew of Edessa, 2.
26. Michael the Syrian, 3, p. 179.
27. Fulcher, 2, 154.
28. ibid., 1, 35.
29. T. S. R. Boase, 1978, pp. 6-9.
30. S. Runciman, 1964, 3, pp. 492-3.
31. Gesta Francorum, I, 149.
32. Matthew of Edessa, II, 120.
33. C. Cahen, 1983, pp. 221-2.
34. J. Prawer, 1952, pp. 490-503; C. Russell, 1985, vol. 5, p. 309.
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41. L. deMas Latrie, 1852-61, vol. 3, p. 660.
42. ibid, p. 118.
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6. Otto of Freising, 7, 32, pp. 360ff.
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14. J. Issaverdenz, 1878, vol. 2, p. 173.

5. *Cyprus – a stepping stone*

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18. A. S. Atiya, 1938, pp. 41-3, 55-6, 59, 62-4, 79-80, 105-6, 122-6.
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